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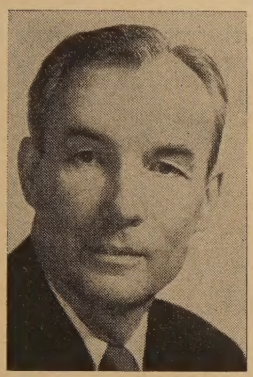
The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching



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LLOYD J. AVERILL

LEST I BE DISQUALIFIED

VOL. XXXII, No. 7 JULY 1961

The Pulpit

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PULPIT POST

A Great Service

SIR: The article, "Who Will Teach Us to Pray?" by Harold Wiley Freer (May) raises a most important issue. It does seem true that our seminaries do not give basic training in the art of prayer. If pastors are not given this training it is reflected all along the line in all age groups in the local parish. There is now a flood of publications on the subject of prayer, but this cannot be an acceptable substitute for a basic training course in the meaning and practice of prayer. Such training is now left to the various disciplined groups where those who are able to participate in such groups are limited. Dr. Freer has rendered us a great service by raising this question and perhaps this will start a movement that will correct this situation.

CLYDE SINDY
The Methodist Church
Lavalette, W. Va.

Folk Christianity

SIR: Mark Rich, in his article on "Folk Religion and Biblical Faith" (May), presents the best analysis and description of this subject that I have seen or heard — up to a point! And this is why he may well mislead the unwary, even though he freely admits the exaggerations of his piece.

In an introductory sentence he defines folk religion as "an expression of the Christian faith which flows out of the common life of the people." Good! But then he proceeds to deal with it as a mere folk *religion,* when for many of its practitioners it is in fact folk *Christianity* — a difference which should be carefully noted.

Rich implies that it is pseudo-Christian, non-Christian and /or anti-Christian. He speaks of it as being a "substitute for the worship of God." Why will he not concede that usually it *is* the worship of God — an expression of sincere Christian discipleship on the part of its devotees — albeit on a none-too-exalted level.

Granted that it is often folksy and that some of the hymnody is shallow. But can Rich or anyone else prove that candles and surplices and litanies can channel more of God's grace to the "formal-ites" than John Q. Grassroots receives at his Wayside Chapel services?

If Rich will review what he has long known about "biblical religion," he will find references, too numerous to list, indicating God's complete dis-

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Melville and Paul

MELVILLE'S *Moby Dick* has a passage which can awaken in us a sense of terror. The whaling crew is in the small boat and, following a tragically unsuccessful mission, is trying to return to the mother ship. But the crew is cut off by storm and darkness and the little boat is lashed and tossed by wind and wave. All attempts to find the other boats and the mother ship have failed. Then it is that Starbuck finally lights the lantern and Queequeg holds it aloft in the darkness on the waif pole. "There then, he sat, holding up that imbecile candle in the heart of that almighty forlornness. There, then, he sat, the sign and symbol of a man without faith, hopelessly holding up hope in the midst of despair." That, says Melville, is man: nothing overhead but eternal darkness; nothing beneath but a cold, bottomless sea; nothing around to break the loneliness and share the terror; and rising and falling with the heaving sea, a foolish candle.

There is a startling similarity between the picture Melville paints and the canvases of man's despair Paul of Tarsus presents. But there is a difference. Melville measured his candle of hope against the demonstrated helplessness of man and found hope pathetic. Paul knew a hope which does not come into its own until the helplessness of man has been demonstrated. He would say that to all other kingdoms, using their temporality but despairing of their ultimacy, man must say "Go" before to God's kingdom, hoping in it, he can say "Come."

Again, Melville's gloom was due to the fact that he measured the candle of hope against the immensity of the sea and the depth of the night, "that almighty forlornness." He deliberately expanded the waves, deepened the night, thickened the mist, contriving circumstances in which hope must seem absurd, convinced that hope is always dependent upon the challenge and the threat of the circumstances of life. Paul saw it differently: "Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees." Christian hope accepts the hazard and the unpredictability which are ingredients of every life. There is no hope in Christ where despair is not the alternative for those not in Christ. Do not speak of Christian hope where any other kind of hope will do. Lessen the possible disaster to the point where "worldly hope" will do and at that point Christian hope has no function. Pass the point where "the worldly hope men set their hearts upon turns ashes" and at that point Christian hope lights *its* lantern. It is a strange and instructive fact that Melville, whose life was relatively placid, came out on the side of despair, while Paul, whose life was harassed by a continuous series of threats and perils and pains came out on the side of hope. One man, brooding on the terrible problems of life, lost nerve, turned bitter and left behind an awesome cynicism which strikes chill into the hearts of men. The other, immersed in a sea of troubles, knew within himself divine realities which compelled him to move through life "rejoicing in hope."

Third, not only did Melville measure hope's imbecile candle against pitifully helpless man and against nature's brutal might; he also measured hope against an empty throne. Like Thomas Hardy, who was his spiritual if not his literary disciple, Melville, too, pulled back the drape and saw "sitting upon the throne of the universe a dumb and brutal idiot, with aimless hands and vacant face." Seldom in literature does one find a line with more sheer horror in it than this one from *Moby Dick:* "Though in many of its aspects this visible world seems formed in love, the invisible spheres were formed in fright." This from the lips of a man nurtured in the Christian tradition, with a romantic sensitivity to the solidarity of human life but knowing no ties between that life and the God who is its Father. In a scheme in which pitiless nature wages its war against pitiful man, with no God in the deeps, no God in the darkness, hope does become absurd.

But Paul was also absurd, absurdly happy and always getting into trouble. Always getting into trouble and absurdly hopeful, holding up all over the almighty forlornness of the Mediterranean his imbecile candle, his hope that "in everything God works for good with those who love him." Our hope, Paul keeps insisting, is in God. Dig it up and plant it elsewhere and it will not do so well. Our hope is in God, who sent a babe into a dark world to do a God's job — pathetic baby, foolish God, imbecile hope. Our hope is in God, who

(Continued on page 9)

Society, Solitude and Salvation

By Sidney E. Mead

1 Kings 19. Mark 9:14-24.

I AM going to talk about "society," the life we live in public; about "solitude," the life we live in and with ourselves; about the kind of balance between them wherein the individual finds meaning and significance — and which, for want of a better term, I call "salvation."

For, you see, I have come to believe that one can stand "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune . . . the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to," so long as he can believe that it is not meaningless — that it is not just "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

And I have come to think that one finds this literally "saving" belief that his life has meaning within himself, in his solitude — *but* only if he is at the same time actively engaged in "society."

Ralph Waldo Emerson saw this clearly and I borrowed my basic insight and terms from his essay, "Society and Solitude," published in 1870 when he was sixty-seven years old and had grown mellow — and perhaps a little gloomy. Emerson's conclusion seems to have been that "solitude [alone] is impracticable, and society [alone] is fatal." Therefore, "we must keep our head in the one and our hands in the other. The conditions are met, if we keep our independence [our private lives] yet do not lose our sympathy [our public lives]." And, he added, "these wonderful horses need to be driven by fine hands" in order to keep them balanced as a team. And I have concluded from my own swing through the twentieth century's "lonely crowd" of "other-directed" people that while Emerson's words seem a little dated his sentiment rings true and sounds surprisingly modern.

In the ninety-one years since he said it, our society has grown vastly more complex and of necessity — with the sheer increase in population — vastly more organized. *We* move within circles of wheels within wheels, caught in organizations piled on organizations — all of our own making — which more and more determine what we shall do and be and when we shall do it and be it. Our organizations aggressively invade our solitude. We know in the midst of our rush what Emerson meant when he said, "We do what we must, and call it by the best names we can, and would fain have the praise of having intended the result which ensues" — if, I would add, it be judged good and receive acclaim.

This immersion in the constant round of work, meetings, committees and so on, we commonly call our "rat race." But our attitude toward it is ambivalent. We rebel against it. But at the same time we love it.

Often we say that we would like to escape from it. This I discovered when it was announced that we (the Meads) were leaving Chicago for Southern California. Practically all our friends, when they heard this, said first, "We shall miss you." This I believed. Since we had lived in the community for twenty-four years we had become to most of these people a part of the landscape — a permanent fixture — and to some, a lamppost against which to lean in their occasional giddy moments. For them our leaving, like the cutting of Thoreau's tree, left a vacant space against the sky. But having said simply and honestly, "we'll miss you," about half these friends added — usually in a confidential tone of voice — "Really I envy you for getting out of this rat race."

I think I know what they meant. And certainly I sympathize with the mood they were in when they said it. We are a busy people, cogs in the wheels of our numerous institutions and organizations, all of which demand our time and energies primarily because each is furthering some good cause. But there are so many things to do that we are likely to discover sooner or later that what the Red Queen told Alice is true:

> "Now, *here,* you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

And then, as the prophet Isaiah said, we are in

SIDNEY EARL MEAD *last year resigned as president of Meadville Theological School (Unitarian) and professor at the University of Chicago (where he had taught for twenty years) to go to Claremont — California's city of the "five college experiment" — where he is now teaching American church history in the Theological School.*

danger even though youthful, of becoming faint and weary — of falling exhausted. For this weariness comes with the feeling that "we do what we must" to keep up and have time for precious little more. Thus we begin to feel trapped in "society."

But the inner spirit of man is sound and will not be thus trapped. People, it asserts, are not born to fall into a way of living that creates a weariness with life itself. So when we look about us today and listen to what is being said from every side in our society, we note — even without his help — what Emerson called "the plaint of tragedy which murmurs from it in regard to persons, to friendship and [to] love." For our spirits tell us that in persons as such — in friendship and in love — lies the reality our hearts seek and are restless until they find rest there. Hence when we begin to feel ourselves so involved in doing what we must that these "dearest events" are escaping us, we may exclaim with Emerson, that if this *activity* is all that is left of our lives, then "nothing [real] is left us now but death. [And] we look to that with a grim satisfaction, saying, there at least is reality that will not dodge us." We are sound in sensing that this kind of immersion in society is fatal to the individual.

Much has happened during the years since Emerson wrote his essay. We have learned much about the human mind and spirit, and we have become very sophisticated. But out of our awesome learning and sophistication comes much to confirm Emerson's insight. Witness, for example, the pronouncement of one who aspires to be a latter-day seer, in a book called *Life Against Death:*

> It also begins to be apparent that mankind, unconscious of its real desires and therefore unable to obtain satisfaction, is hostile to life and ready to destroy itself. Freud was right in positing a death instinct, and the development of weapons of destruction makes our present dilemma plain: we either come to terms with our unconscious instincts and drives — with life and with death — or else we surely die.[1]

And twenty-two years ago another such prophet in a book called *Man Against Himself* noted:

> . . . whoever studies the behavior of human beings cannot escape the conclusion that we must reckon with an enemy within the lines. It becomes increasingly evident that some of the destruction which curses the earth is *self*-destruction; the extraordinary propensity of the human being to join hands with external forces in an attack upon his own existence is one of the most remarkable of biological phenomena.[2]

I do not mean to argue that Emerson anticipated all this in detail. Certainly he did not arrive at his conclusions by the same route. Quaint as such an approach may seem to our analytical age, he entered man's house through the front door. But in it he found much the same furniture as do the modern analysts. So he said that when man is too much in society, "society is fatal" and can drive an individual to look to death "with grim satisfaction."

Today the learned Dr. C. G. Jung speaks of "a mood of world destruction" — reminding us that we do not necessarily want to forestall the big and final explosion.

And this sounds very much like a third modern prophet, who under a more hopeful title — *The Will to Live* — and out of his experience as a medical doctor wrote in 1951 that there are

> moments in which we may become battle weary. We may yearn to withdraw from a struggle which can have — or so we believe — no satisfactory outcome. At such times the body begins to lose its ability to make adjustments, or its resistance to disease. When the longing for peace outweighs the joy of battle, when the determination to seek peace becomes irreversible and conclusive, then we die.
>
> This is what is meant by the statement that man dies when he wants to die, that he dies *because* he wants to die.[3]

This view, which seems so very new and startling to some of us, is actually very, very old in our religious tradition. Does not the prophet in our Scripture reading exactly fit this modern doctor's description? If ever a man grew "battle weary" and yearned to "withdraw from a struggle" which he thought could have "no satisfactory outcome," that man was Elijah. He had been riding high, enjoying the struggle, until Jezebel — that wild, wild woman and queen — an unbeatable combination for any man to face —got after him. Then he fled "into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree; and he asked that he might die, saying 'It is enough [or, as we say, "I've had it!"]; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers.' " Then he began to "withdraw from the struggle" by going to sleep.

I suppose that was the crucial moment when "the longing for peace" exactly balanced "the joy of battle," but the determination to seek it was not yet "irreversible and conclusive." Elijah did not die.

Why? We all know the explanation given — the story of the wind that "rent the mountain," the earthquake and the fire, and of the "still, small voice" that asked the prophet, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" And after Elijah had made his somewhat lame excuses, the voice commanded — it must have been less still and small now — "Go, return, on your way. . . . " And Elijah went back into the same battle, into the same "rat race," no longer weary, no longer longing for the final peace. Nothing outside Elijah had changed at all.

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[2] From *Man Against Himself*, copyright, 1938, by Karl A. Menninger. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

[3] Arnold A. Hutschnecker, *The Will to Live* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1951). Used by permission.

The change was *in* Elijah — and it made all the difference.

We all know this story. But I am sure we misunderstand it completely if we take it literally. It is a parable — an allegory — and what it says is repeated in the poetry of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah: "but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

And that is what Elijah wanted, and what we really want. Not to escape our society in the final peace which is death, but to run through our allotted "rat race" and "not be weary" — to walk through all its noise and turmoil, its confusion, stupidity, meaninglessness and violence, "and not faint." And to do this we must learn to find that inner solitude wherein the still, small voice speaks for the renewing of our strength, and speaks from out of the earthquake, wind, and fire of life itself.

I believe that my friends, while well intentioned, were wrong when they intimated — more to themselves than to me perhaps — that one can escape his particular "rat race" simply by moving from Chicago to Claremont. For one can achieve no escape at all merely by moving through geographical space. What Elijah discovered, what Isaiah declared, what some of our doctors tell us, is that what is required is a much more subtle and intimate move through one's own inner space. We can live in society and do effective work if we can live with our solitary selves. Many of our counselors say this.

And so did Emerson in his delineation of the individual who must live both in his society and in his solitude. Solitude complete, aside from being impracticable and impossible, is the lonesome road to the peace of "dusty death." But society complete, without solitude, is fatal to the individual. So "we keep our heads" in solitude, our hands in society, and live our lives in both at the same time.

We must live and act in society simply because *human* individuals are inconceivable except in communities, and we must run the communities in which we live. In society we are nourished and sustained by the sympathetic understanding and companionship of other people — as we by our sympathetic understanding and companionship nourish and sustain them. So in bearing one another's burdens, we make possible for each the salutary solitude he needs. For in that solitude the harassed individual, listening to the still, small voice, finds meaning in himself and in it all. It is in that solitude, and there alone, that the individual glimpses what Whitehead called "the eternal greatness incarnate in the passage of temporal fact."

The gospels are the myth which suggests where this saving glimpse of the "eternal greatness" in the life of man is to be looked for. And to me the striking thing about the story is that it is not a supercolossal, stupendous, extraordinarily expensive, five-star production such as our movie-makers would conjure up out of this astounding thing. It is the story of very ordinary people, engaged in very common work — fishing, collecting taxes, sowing, reaping, preparing meals, entertaining visiting teachers, and so on. To many, perhaps a majority, of his contemporaries even the chief character seemed all too common. "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" some inquired, with you know what inflection. Nicer and more religious people called him a winedrinker and a glutton. And they noted with delicious moralism that he ate with Publicans and sinners and talked with prostitutes as if they were people. And finally they had a big laugh because he hung on a cross, dying, and they saw that he who had talked of saving others could not save himself from them — the clever people of society alone.

But this teacher had said — and the ages cannot forget it — that his kingdom was not of this world — not of "society" — but existed in that realm of solitude where I and God are one — in which kingdom men find quiet strength to overcome the world.

Whatever else the myth may convey, to me it seems to teach that the "eternal greatness" is incarnate in the mundane everyday activities of people — even in Chicago and Long Beach and Claremont — it is within them all the time, wherever they are. It is in that vision incarnate in everyday affairs — in that glimpse of meaning resident there — that one's strength is renewed. Then he may run the same course in society as before, "and not be weary"; walk the same outward path, "and not faint."

Without such inner solitude, while in a society as complexly organized as ours, man becomes "mass man," without individuality, his life indeed "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." In such solitude even as one can achieve in the midst of the sound and fury itself, and wherever his "rat race" may be set, belief that one's life has meaning is found — and that *is* "salvation."

We are saved, if at all, by what we can really believe in our solitude. We are saved not by what we tell others, but by what we can honestly tell ourselves: and while living and participating fully in our modern society, which by its very nature tends to make such belief extremely difficult.

We are saved, if at all, not by escaping from society and not because we have found or achieved some final and unshakable certainty, but rather because however often in society we feel meaning slipping away and must pray with apprehension, "help thou my unbelief," we can in our solitude bravely affirm, "I believe!"

Lest I Be Disqualified

By Lloyd J. Averill

INCREASED professionalism is both the pressing need and the besetting peril of the Protestant ministry today. The growing concern for greater professional competence — a concern which arises out of the complex and varied demands which are put upon the pastorate — needs to be matched by a continued awareness of those sins of professionalism to which the pastoral role is peculiarly susceptible. It is still a danger, as it was in apostolic times, that having preached to others, the preacher may find himself disqualified.

The New Testament could anticipate only dimly, of course, the development of a professional clergy drawing its full support from the churches. In the gospels Jesus speaks in vague metaphor about the laborer being worthy of his hire. We have only Paul's comment to the Corinthians as evidence for any more precise form of Jesus' words. Paul wrote, "The Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). Yet oddly enough, Paul boasted that it was one commandment he had never kept.

Why did Paul decline the privilege of a salaried ministry and insist instead on providing for his own financial need by means of his trade as a tentmaker? Not, surely, out of any distinction between what was mandatory and what was only permissive in the teaching of Christ. That kind of legalism was not congenial to the Apostle. Neither was it because those struggling mission communities were in no position to support their missionary leader. The tone of Paul's remarks makes it clear that he would not have accepted a wage from them, whatever their material condition.

Nor was this simply Paul's individualism here asserting itself, an unwillingness to give up his personal independence. Indeed, the truth would seem to lie quite at the opposite pole from this. The Apostle was not seeking to avoid being bound into the lives of the churches; rather the freedom he sought was the freedom to create even surer ties. No single church should be able to claim a special relation to him which would hinder his relation to all the other churches.

So what was at issue in Paul's renunciation of a professional ministry was his determination that nothing should separate him from the life of the churches. And because he was convinced that professionalism would bring about such separation, he resolved to support himself by his trade.

I.

There is at least one significant difference between Paul's situation and our own. The acceptance or rejection of professional status was for him a genuine option. For good or ill, the contemporary ministry only rarely has a choice. For the most part, we must accept the fact that the churches in our own time are, and will continue to be, dependent on a ministry which derives its full livelihood from its ministering.

Nevertheless, we must affirm that for us too it is often our professional standing which insulates us effectively, if unconsciously, from those who are given into our pastoral care. Because the contemporary minister is a professional, drawing his livelihood from the church and carrying on his primary work within its privileged limits, he is surrounded by sanctions and credited with virtues, whether real or merely imputed, which make his lot essentially different from those who sit in his congregation. The resultant atmosphere which surrounds the preacher frequently distorts his view of reality, much as the atmosphere of our planet distorts the appearance of objects which stand beyond it. If the astronomer were unaware of this tendency of the atmosphere to distort, his report of the world outside would be in error. But through the use of corrective means, mechanical and mathematical, the astronomer is able to relate himself accurately and effectively to the real world. The atmosphere is not of the astronomer's making; indeed, in most of his nonprofessional activities he may be quite unconscious of its existence. To

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continue thus unconscious in his professional duties, however, would be to take distortion for reality.

The answer is not to eliminate the atmosphere but to make wise use of correctives whereby the distortions themselves can be minimized or eliminated. Even so, the atmosphere which surrounds the minister is not of his own making. Like it or not, he will be called variously "reverend," "pastor," or "parson," with all the rights, privileges, and misconceptions thereunto appertaining. He cannot jump out of his skin. Nor can he alter radically overnight the long tradition or the present character of the church's ministry. It does remain for him, however, to exercise a special, constant and personal vigilance lest he fall quite unconsciously into any of the peculiar distortions which are the result of that atmosphere which separates him from the rest of the world, and to bring to bear upon those distortions the proper corrective.

Unless he can do that, then in Paul's words, having preached to others, he himself will be disqualified.

II.

I want to suggest three distressingly common distortions which all too often afflict the preacher and affect his perception of moral reality.

The first of these is the distortion of an imputed professional goodness. As ministers we are constantly surrounded by every influence tending to goodness. Indeed, attempt is made to shield us from all that is coarse and questionable. Watch the embarrassment of a man indulging in mild profanity when he suddenly discovers that there is a minister present. His embarrassment more than likely springs not from a feeling that it should not have been said, but rather from the conviction that it should not have been said in the tender hearing of a man of the cloth.

We are expected to be more virtuous than ordinary men, and we are usually given the benefit of the doubt in any question where virtue is at stake.

Not long ago a customs officer suggested that my trip through customs would be greatly facilitated if I would identify myself as a clergyman. It would save me the inconvenience of a detailed examination to which other incoming citizens were subjected, he assured me.

It is not surprising, then, that we may seldom see a personal issue compounded by moral ambiguity. We see moral issues as clear-cut, moral answers as virtually self-evident and moral action as easy. So we begin to think that goodness is a simple matter. We become like the rich young ruler, as interpreted by the late Edwin McNeill Poteat: able to testify that he had kept the Mosaic law because, in the shelter of privilege, he had never really confronted the temptation to do otherwise.

So the atmosphere of our own private existence — the atmosphere of an imputed professional goodness — may distort the real world in which goodness is neither simple nor easy.

For the entrepreneur who is caught between supplier and consumer, between stockholder and employee, commercial goodness is neither simple nor easy. For the politician who is caught between party discipline and personal conviction, political goodness is neither simple nor easy. For the laboring man who is caught between management speed-up and union slowdown, occupational goodness is neither simple nor easy. For the white collar worker who is caught between government regulations and his employer's demand that he falsify his weekly tax report of hours worked, business goodness is neither simple nor easy. For the student caught between the demands of fraternity solidarity and his own integrity, personal goodness is neither simple nor easy. For the soldier who is caught between his own ideals and what he takes to be national necessity, patriotic goodness is neither simple nor easy.

And when we wonder, as we sometimes do, why businessman and politician, laborer and white collar worker, student and soldier, are unresponsive to Christian preaching, as frequently as not the source of their refusal to listen lies in the spectacle of professional churchmen who are so far separated from the agonizing dilemmas of human existence by the aura of an imputed professional goodness that their exhortations are empty.

> He cannot heal who has not suffered much,
> For only Sorrow sorrow understands.
> They will not come for healing at our touch
> Who have not seen the scars upon our hands.*

This is not to deny that here and there a man's ministry may be forced into moral ambiguity by the appearance of challenge or opportunity for which no clear or supporting mandate from the congregation exists. It is to suggest that this does not happen as often as it ought to, and that even when it does happen the odds that he will land on his feet are greater for the minister than for other men.

III.

The second distortion created by the professional atmosphere which surrounds us is the direct result of the first. It is the distortion of an irresponsible moralism.

Just because we are so frequently led to see issues in business, politics and personal life as clear-cut and unequivocal, our preaching comes to take on a moralizing tone. But what is worse, it is an irresponsible moralism. To the chain store

* Edwin McNeill Poteat, "Stigmata," *Over the Sea, the Sky* (New York: Harper). Used by permission.

manager, whose company requires him to give short weight, we say in effect, "It is your Christian obligation to give up that job." To the college professor teaching in a school which restricts the admission of minority groups we say, "Resign at once." To the carpenter who works on houses for which the contractor is furnishing substandard materials we say, "Get out of the building trades." If these illustrations are slightly overdrawn — but only slightly — they nevertheless point to the hortatory and thoroughly arbitrary approach which many of us take in preaching about moral issues. In spite of our pretensions to the contrary, when you strip away our oral rhetoric and biblical camouflage, this is what is being said.

Now what makes this kind of moralism irresponsible is that the preacher is safely removed from having to share the consequences of the action he so eagerly prescribes. A minister was preaching eloquently and piously one day on the need for young people to give their lives to foreign missions. As he invited any so moved to come forward, he was thunderstruck to discover his own daughter among them, and he could not suppress the protest, "My God, I didn't mean you!" But such personal consequence of our preaching comes only rarely. More often we are not required to face, with the chain store manager and his family, the sudden curtailment of income. We will not be required to calculate, with the college professor, loss of seniority and retirement benefits. We will not be required to confront, with the carpenter, a labor market characterized by growing unemployment. Our salary goes on, our denominational pension is secure, and in or out of depression and recession there are more vacant pulpits than ministers to fill them.

So by the very fact that we do not stand under the same grim necessities as other men, or under the moral ambiguities such necessities involve, our lot is essentially different from theirs. We are in fact separated from them. And from the security of our own social and economic position, we may find ourselves prescribing moral action while remaining immune to the consequences of that action. In so doing, we widen our separation from the common life and condemn our ministries to tragic irresponsibility.

There is a third element which is a distortion in its own right, but which also bears the clue to the corrective for the distortions of imputed goodness and irresponsible moralism. It is the distortion of clerical self-sufficiency.

One of the most common themes in contemporary preaching centers upon the importance of the church, the fellowship of Christian believers. And in the revival of churchly interest we have stressed the importance of the whole community of faith in supplementing and correcting the faith and commitment of the individual. There is no such thing as a solitary Christian, we say; Christians desperately need each other. Just because the individual's perception of God's will is so frequently dim, he needs the perception of a sensitive Christian fellowship to sharpen and correct his own insight. Just because the individual often stands in rebellion against that will even when he sees it clearly, he needs the support of a concerned Christian fellowship to encourage his steadfastness and strengthen his own faithfulness. This is the burden of much of our preaching.

And of course, it is all true. The problem comes, however, just at the point where the minister fails to submit himself to the same kind of supporting and correcting discipline. So the final, and in many ways the basic, distortion is mirrored in our guarded self-sufficiency. Here, more than at any other place, is the danger that, having preached to others, we ourselves should be disqualified.

For too many ministers, the pulpit and pastoral functions are privileged sanctuaries which are not subject to the corrective and creative influences of the whole fellowship. Yet it is clear that this kind of isolation leads directly to preaching which is marked by professional goodness and irresponsible moralism. And it is equally clear that the only way to bridge our separation — to keep goodness from becoming professional and morality from becoming irresponsible — is to take our places humbly in the fellowship of those who forsake self-sufficiency and confess their common need. It is in the fellowship of the church that all, pastors and laymen alike, can learn under God's guidance to struggle faithfully and realistically with the moral ambiguities of our time. And it is there that we must learn to bear one another's burdens in very concrete ways, sharing willingly, joyfully, and responsibly the full consequence of the fearful moral decisions which each is called to make.

Then it is the preacher who must confess that he is, of all men, most needful of precisely that kind of fellowship. There he may learn to say with the Apostle, I discipline myself, lest having preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

Melville and Paul

(Continued from page 3)

revealed himself in a reviled man and used a shameful cross to save a sinful world. How odd! Our hope is in God, who rolled a stone and raised a Son and will yet make him King and keep to himself all who enter his kingdom. We do not preach with Melville an imbecile candle but with Paul the Light of the world. — KYLE HASELDEN

My Country, My God and I

By John F. Anderson, Jr.

Amos 7:1-9; Mark 12:13-17.

ANY virtue can become a sin. Did you realize that? Even the queen of virtues, love, can become twisted in its possessiveness until it destroys itself in bringing hate from the other person who was to be the object of love. As Dr. Kenneth Foreman reminds us, "Unbalanced, exaggerated, ill-considered, unintelligent virtues cease to be virtues and begin to be sins. Patriotism is no exception."

It is natural to love one's country; there is something wrong with us when we do not.

> Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said,
> This is my own, my native land!

Patriotism is good until it dissolves into the sin of conceit. This happens when we feel superior to all other countries, when we feel that we alone deserve God's blessing. Patriotism can also be terribly wrong when it is blind, when its expression becomes, "My country — right or wrong — but still my country." This is dangerously wrong unless our meaning is, like that of the wife who said, "My husband may be right or wrong, but he is still my husband, and I love him." J. B. Priestly once wrote, "Our behavior toward our country should be like that of a loving wife toward her husband. She will do anything for her husband except stop criticizing him or trying to improve him."

Our Lord Jesus had some thought-provoking words about patriotism one day when the Pharisees and Herodians tried to trap him by asking: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?" They were hardly prepared for his remarkable answer: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." He illustrated his point by holding a coin in his hand, a coin on which was inscribed the image of Caesar, the symbol of the fact that they were under Roman rule, that they owed something for protection and a guarantee of rights. The unexpected part of his answer came when he reminded them that they owed something deeper to God, for he, as the supreme ruler, protects and guarantees their rights. Thus Jesus reminds us that, in any political setting, God holds supreme claim on all people.

The way in which this works is dramatically illustrated in many places in Scripture, but none more so than in this story of Amos, the shepherd farmer of Tekoa. His vision of locusts devouring the land is God's eloquent reminder of what will happen to their country as the people forget that God is really their King. The next vision is one of fire which comes as a result of the dryness due to drought. After these signs of judgment, Amos had a vision of God holding a plumb line to make his perpendicular measurement. This reminds the farmer of the way in which he used to check the rock walls to see if they were sagging, or if they were straight enough to stand.

In this age we are rendering unto Caesar. There is no doubt of that. Our tax structure and tax philosophy are hopelessly involved. The important consideration for us as a nation is, "What are we rendering unto God?" In recent days we engaged in deep debate as to whom we would place over us as governor and as president. The major consideration is this: are we willing to place God Almighty and his law above them? Wherein lies our highest allegiance? Answers to those questions will determine whether the next decade will be the "spiritual sixties" for America or not. Mark it well: God is holding his plumb line against our patriotism.

We are always glad to sing loud and clear about our patriotic feelings. I propose that we measure our words carefully and put meaning into them by letting Katherine Lee Bates preach to us this morning out of her beautiful patriotic hymn, "America the Beautiful." Look at the stanzas of

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this hymn and see what she says true Christian patriotism must be.

The first stanza says: this nation under God must overcome its sectionalism.

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.

It is normal and good to love the locality where one is born and reared. The girl from the beach in Florida is never quite at home in the Rockies. The man from Michigan always longs for the snows of winter. The Texan loves his plain, the north Mainer his woods, and the San Franciscan his fogs. Still, this fondness for the place most familiar is no excuse for the vested interest of sections of the country pulling against each other. A house divided against itself cannot stand, and this nation divided into small sections instead of stretching "from sea to shining sea" in one brotherhood will not long endure either. I believe in home rule, but home rule can become anarchy when it ignores the rights of the majority. I believe in state rights but not to the extent of overruling human rights. You see, it is a question of sovereignty. The problem is not, "He up there is not going to tell me down here," but rather, "God is going to tell both of us, for he is sovereign."

Sometime ago I read about a small girl who wandered away from her farm home in Kansas and became lost in the tall waving wheat fields. When she had not appeared by dark, her mother became alarmed and called the neighbors. After searching all night in vain, they summoned the militia and help from the town. Late in the afternoon, someone stopped them and said, "We are going at this too haphazardly. Let us get out here on the road, join hands, and comb this field systematically." In a very few moments they found the little girl — dead. She had only been dead a short while. As the parents hovered over her, giving expression to their deep grief, someone on the edge of the crowd who had participated in the hunt was heard to say, "Why didn't we join hands yesterday?" God help us if America ever falls because of its selfish sectionalism. Too late it will be for someone to say, "Why didn't we join hands yesterday?"

In the second stanza we see that this nation, under God, must overhaul its idea of freedom.

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America! God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

As Dr. Carlyle Marney reminds us, freedom is a good word, an Anglo-Saxon word that is literally "vria-doom" meaning "all in the family" (none a slave). Our false definition of it often means that we confuse license and liberty. For example, apply our erroneous definition to your home. If your house is like ours, breakfast is a rather hectic affair even with everyone co-operating. Suppose each one exercised his false freedom by remaining completely independent. One child would choose to come with hands dirty; another child would choose not to come at all. Suppose mother exercised her freedom by saying, "I'll sleep through and not get up and cook it at all." You can see the chaos that would result. "Liberty is not the right to do as you choose, it is the responsibility of choosing to do what is right."

Have you ever noticed in the Preamble of the Constitution that liberty is named only after the listing of corporate responsibilities: "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Freedom, you see, is not the absence of restraint, it is the presence of possibility. Freedom is not the privilege of acting alone, it is the privilege of acting in concert, of belonging to the family, of all being equal and none a slave, as the Anglo-Saxon word really means.

Moses led the children out of bondage into freedom: a freedom that consisted of being under the commandments of God. Some Americans seem to think that our democracy ought to guarantee them the freedom to do as they please, no matter what the whim. There may be a word for that, but it is not freedom. A man who marries does not give up his freedom, he finds it, for only then is he "vria-doom" in the family. Jesus said, "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." Only in the family of God, as we are born into it through Christ, can we really find this priceless privilege.

And so Miss Bates says we must overcome our sectionalism, and overhaul our idea of freedom.

In the third stanza, we see that this nation, under God, must overrule its materialism.

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!
America! America! May God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness
And every gain divine!

Economics is always determinative in politics. They told Marie Antoinette, "The people have no bread." She lost her kingdom with the attitude, "Let them eat cake." The Boston Tea Party was perpetrated because of taxation without representation, an economic crisis. The New Deal

with Franklin Roosevelt swept over the country with its NRA, the National Recovery Act. It is inevitable that the nation shall sustain us and that we shall, in turn, contribute to sustaining the nation. The nation is like an individual — it must have a correct sense of values or its corporate personality will be destroyed.

T. S. Eliot, in his poem "Choruses from the Rock," prophesies what happens to a country that forgets its spiritual values and turns its back on God. He pictures the desolation where the inhabitants have vanished and nothing but weeds and rubble remain where people lived.

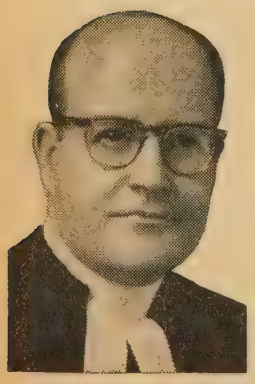
> And the wind shall say: "Here were decent, godless people:
> Their only monument the asphalt road
> And a thousand lost golf balls."*

*From *The Rock* by T. S. Eliot, copyright 1934, by Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. Used by permission.

God meant us to use the land and its natural resources, to cause it to multiply and sustain life. But when we make a god out of gold, when we make things an end in themselves, when we as a nation use people and love things — instead of vice versa — Amos' judgment of the locust and the fire is applicable to us too. To a prosperous America that is in danger of selling its soul, our Lord Jesus says, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

Yes, any virtue can be a sin. God help us if our patriotism is sub-Christian.

> O beautiful for patriot dream
> That sees, beyond the years,
> Thine alabaster cities gleam,
> Undimmed by human tears!
> America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
> And crown thy good with brotherhood
> From sea to shining sea!



What the Image of God Requires From the Image of Man

The Image of Man

By Donald Macleod

ONE summer some years ago I served as a student missionary for the Canadian church and part of my job was to visit the homes of fishermen scattered along the rugged coastline of the Gulf of the St. Lawrence. Occasionally I called upon one old fellow who was as lazy and dissolute as they come and who spent most of his time sitting upon the shaky porch of his wretched house and gazing out to sea. Although his name was "mud" among the other fishermen, yet there were times when I caught mystical flashes in his conversation, especially when he looked out over the broad expanse of the ocean and mumbled something about "man made in the image of God."

The old rascal is likely dead by now, but he came to my mind as I thought about this theme. Something kept reminding him of the image of God — maybe it was the sea with its beauty, its far horizons, and its terrible storms — but it never seemed to occur to him that the image of God had anything to do with the image of man. For him these two never did get together. And all his moral turpitude could be traced to this major lack of insight and understanding.

Today you and I have a similar imbalance of emphasis. Ours, however, is a matter of reversing the focus of the old fisherman on the porch. We concentrate feverishly upon the image of man and usually fail to give even a passing gesture to the image of God. Indeed, for many of us these days the image of man has become an obsession and for this reason our newspapers and magazines have been filled recently with questions about the kind of image we are setting before the world. After the political conventions some months ago, commentators reflected upon "the presidential image" we had created. In religious circles today, students and scholars are discussing "the image of

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the ministry" that American Protestantism has produced. Tourists going abroad are reminded when they secure their passports that they either make or mar the American image in the eyes of foreign countries.

Now the Bible has a lot to say about the image of man. It is interesting to note, however, that the image of man is rarely discussed without reference to the image of God. These terms do not appear in isolation; the image of man is usually set in juxtaposition with the image of God. And therefore the teaching of the Bible implies that because of what God is, man is. Listen to the Psalmist as he sings, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" And then immediately he goes on to sketch that marvelous image of man: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor." Or in Psalm 19 he traces a majestic image of God: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." And then follows an image of the man who is converted by the law of God, made pure by the commandments of God, and becoming morally upright through God who is his strength and redeemer. Or again in Psalm 111 he portrays the sovereign character of God whose works are honorable, righteous, and true; and then he goes on into Psalm 112 to present a thrilling image of the man who fears God and whose place in God's moral universe is everlastingly secure.

The Bible knows nothing of the usual modern philosophy of self-help or of the practical religionists who recommend that a bit of positive thinking will produce an image of man that will be satisfactory, the man who is socially well-adjusted, who wears the badge of material success, and who shoots in the low seventies on the golf links. But the Bible teaches, as Bishop Newbigin says, "that man's manhood consists in his relation with God." The only truly genuine image of man is produced by a certain relationship to the spirit of God. And it is just here that our generation has failed so badly. For instead of developing this relationship with God so that our image should be the reflection of his being, we have tried to make God into our image. We have said in effect, "Let us make God into *our* likeness." And this is why we set such a smudgy image before the world. The image man creates by himself is usually the miserable average, "cabin'd, cribb'd, and confin'd" by the status quo. For as P. T. Forsyth has cautioned us, "Unless there is within us that which is above us we shall soon yield to that which is around us." But God said, "Let us make man in our own image . . . " (Genesis 1:26). And Isaiah was hoping for better men for a better age when he wrote, "At that day shall a man look to his Maker. . . . and he shall not look to the work of his hands" (Isa. 17:7, 8). In essence, these voices imply that only as we live in a relationship of trust and obedience to God and within the embrace of his love of us shall we wear that image that is our human potential and privilege.

Now when we apply this truth to our common life, what actual significance does it have?

It says something great for our human nature.

It is very easy today to maintain the wrong image of man. When our reading and entertainment are confined largely to the tabloids, TV and movies where the baser drives of our human nature are played up and glorified, it would appear that these alone count. People seem to be, as Elvis Presley said, "all shook up." And the ends of life do not appear to be anything more lofty than self, sex and money. Men and women seem to be out for themselves if they can and when they can. And a mother says to her little boy, "Sonny, you look out for yourself. Nobody else will look out for you." And even when we take the broader view and try to detect something of human greatness, it is harried by the dreadful prospect of man's moral weakness. And the voice of Arnold Toynbee declares, "Man has become a god in technology and an ape in life." How forlorn in this atmosphere are expressions such as the Kingdom of God on earth, peace of mind and soul, or man transformed into the image of the heavenly! How much these words sound like pious dreams! How easy it is to follow H. L. Mencken's cynical slant when he said, "Man is a sick fly on a dizzy wheel."

But the Bible tells us that man and life are more than this, that man's true humanity is not found in himself but in his relation to God. And regardless of how bad things are we are still haunted by a higher image that the muddiness of our confused moral values cannot put down.

Just when we are tempted to let the vision go, there march into our common experience such royal figures as Albert Schweitzer, Ida Scudder, Helen Keller, Thomas Dooley, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and the five missionary martyrs of the Ecuador. There is something heroic and splendid about them that makes our ordinary natures look ridiculous and shabby. They wear an image that is different and we sense in them a greatness that is neither from themselves nor in ourselves. This is what Norman Macleod meant when he told of a young woman in Glasgow who said, "I heard Hector Mackinnon preach, and I saw God; and every time I heard him after that, he brought me nearer to Him."

It says something serious to our human responsibility.

Griffith Thomas of *The Sunday School Times* once said, "Responsibility is man's response to God's ability." I suppose that one of the reasons our image has been faulty is that we have been running away from this responsibility; we've

been trying to escape the claim of the eternal image upon us. Like Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven," we've "fled him down the nights and down the days." We have run from the responsibility involved. For when God said, "Let us make man in our image," he indicated his love for his creatures. But love is never a one-way matter. God's love is given, but to be complete, it must be received.

And this is where you and I come in. We become truly ourselves when we accept our responsibility to God's will and way. If we forfeit this responsibility and reject his claim upon us, we break our relationship with him. And when any man does this, he ceases to be a man and becomes a beast. Over the gate of the infamous Dachau concentration camp in Nazi Germany were written five words: "There is no God here." And certainly on the inside the brute reigned supreme and moral responsibility to God and man did not exist. Shakespeare was getting at the same idea when his Othello cried out in agony to Desdemona, "Yet I do love thee and when I love thee not, chaos comes back again." Indeed, the Hebrew religion has always insisted that a man becomes a person to the extent that he recognizes that God has spoken to him, called him by his name, and thereby brought him into a relationship of unique responsibility to Himself. And again and again in history when men and women have responded to this call from the Unseen, they reflected a new image which others found to be different, because there was something redemptive about it. How often did Jesus indicate his untiring responsibility to God's hold on his life when he would say, "I must be about my Father's business"; "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day"; "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am straitened until it is accomplished." And in his face people saw an image of holiness, love and truth so tremendous that they either ran away from him or committed themselves completely to him. And those for whom he became "the image of the invisible God" fulfilled their responsibility to God and man as they demonstrated his likeness in all they had to say and do.

It says something vital about our human sacrifice.

Once I read about a brilliant young man who was killed in a railroad accident. When the news reached his home, his father strode over to the manse and stormed into the minister's study without knocking and blurted out, "Tell me now, where was God when my son was killed?" And in that difficult moment the minister said, "God was just where he was when his own son was killed."

In other words, even a holy God by his very nature could not escape pain. And if you and I accept the responsibility of wearing God's image — and we dare not do otherwise — we've got to take the cost along with it. For the image of God has a price written upon it. And that price is Calvary. And it is just here that in our blindness we have put the wrong image before the world. We try to impress upon mankind an image of our Christian concern for the underprivileged through our foreign aid program, for example, but not one bundle on an Indian freight car or African wharf wears the word "sacrifice" upon it. We've been talking in religious circles about "the servant image," and if anything is the God-image this is it, but we've been slow to practice it because it exacts a fearful price. Robert Moses said in New York recently that we are "too fond of security" and that "every American, old or young, needs a hair shirt." We have fallen into the moral rut of eagerly serving humanity in a thousand ways *that do not hurt us.* Our image in wartime was magnificent, but in peace it has been unworthy of us as it has been reflected in cases such as these: the cheap politician who seeks to get votes under a shabby slogan, "Get the boys back home!"; the unlettered tourist who shakes off the tragedies of Europe by saying glibly, "It's great to be back in the good old U.S.A."; the university student who remarks cynically, "I'd like to take a world tour to find out what they are doing with our money." This is not the servant image. This is the image of man divorced from the image of God.

No image has a shred of integrity unless it is endorsed with one's life.

The other day I reread that old gospel hymn, "The Ninety and Nine," made popular by the revival services of D. L. Moody and Ira Sankey. More powerfully than in any of our greater hymns, the shepherd reflects the image we ought to appropriate for ourselves and for the good of humanity:

"Lord, Thou hast here Thy ninety and nine,
Are they not enough for Thee?"
But the Shepherd made answer, "This of Mine
Has wandered away from Me:
And although the road be rough and steep,
I go to the desert to find My sheep."

But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.....
.....

And all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There rose a cry to the gate of heaven,
"Rejoice, I have found my sheep!"
And the angels echoed around the throne,
"Rejoice, for the Lord brings back His own."

"And God said, Let us make man in our image. . . ." "At that day shall man look to his Maker. . . . And he shall not look to the work of his hands."

THE MOURNERS BENCH

By G. Hobab Kish

I WOULD like to request that what is said here will not be passed any further. If it should get back to my choir director or to my music committee, good old Kish will be looking for a job. So, this is just between us. See?

I am fed up with certain qualities certain choir directors develop. I have been around long enough to know that it is better to let things alone in this department rather than complain or criticize. Hell hath no fury like a music committee on the rampage. So most of us go along year after year with the status quo lest a worse fate befall us. If the fellow is a fair musician we let him rule his kingdom even when every Sunday our sense of worship is outraged and we suspect that we are being robbed both financially and religiously.

For instance, why is it that these birds cannot tell time? Why is it that they must practice until exactly eleven o'clock or one minute after? How many times a minister goes into his pulpit with no calmness of spirit because he has had to herd the choir in on time. Added to that far from inspiring task, he has listened to a frantic director give last minute directions so that everybody is confused and nervous.

One time, just once, I knew I could stand it no longer. I called a meeting of the committee after church and told them they could either fire the choir director or me. I did not much care which, but they were not going to have both of us around any longer. You will find it hard to believe this, but they fired the director.

What is the point of a divided chancel if the choir director has to bring out a music rack and place a platform right in the center and stand in front of the altar? Then, while he motions until everybody is standing where he wants him to stand, the congregation is transported out of the church into a concert hall — and most of them never get back into the church again that morning. Is the choir to put on a performance for an audience? It was a more honest arrangement when the choir sat behind the pulpit, facing the congregation. While their whispering — and now and then gum-chewing — added mighty little to the worship service, at least it was not necessary to move so much stuff when they performed. Is there a voice in the land that will suggest that choirs ought to be directed discreetly and unobtrusively? Is there much point in making the altar the center if it is to be obscured by some fellow waving his arms?

That leads me to another point. Can nothing be done with these directors — both men and women — who seem to be taking their setting-up exercises as they direct? It always seems to me that they conceive music to be something that is produced by sheer physical effort. The trouble is that there is no relation between their strenuous efforts and the quality of the music they draw out. Quite the opposite. Usually, the more athletic they become, the less desirable is the quality of the anthem. Men will not be heard for their much speaking, and choir directors are not to be desired for their much arm action.

The choir director who is only a musician and not a churchman ought to be directed elsewhere. For the church is God's house and the place where we come to be met and to meet him. I shall not forget the experience of hearing a boys' choir, out of sight, in a Spanish cathedral. But the fellows I am talking about come to be seen. Now and again, one of them will even wave his arms when the congregation sings a hymn. Yell leaders are all right, I guess, at a football game, although the whole affair seems a little silly to me now. But may the good Lord deliver us from their tribe in church.

A Prayer

ALMIGHTY GOD, whose love for us has called us to thine altars where we may remember thee and thy glorious works, we praise thee for all the ways that thou hast stirred us and lured us to the knowledge of goodness. The light of day has wakened us, thy bounties have nourished and sustained us, and our feet have been led to this place.

Open our minds by thy instruction to come to us from thy servant. May thy church proclaim the gospel that men may be released from darkness and minister thy love that they may be lifted out of loneliness. May thy church be strong to rebuke injustice that men may be released from bondage, and earnest in spreading knowledge with power that they may rise above pain and drudgery.

As we receive thy gifts of light and learning, of strength and health, of companionship and love, O Lord, may we ever seek to use them in thy service, shaping them into good works and words, into those things which men truly need, into arts of sound and sense that inspire to nobility and bring proper delight to the soul. Grant each of us in all our dealing with each other those virtues which bind heart to heart and spirit to spirit, making us one and bringing us toward that beauty of life shown forth in thy Son. Grant him dominion over each of our hearts, and amidst the waking up of nations may he be proclaimed King of kings and Lord of lords forever and ever. Amen — *W. Barnett Blakemore, dean of Disciples Divinity House and associate dean of Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, University of Chicago.*

A Christian Looks at Africa

By Francis B. Sayre, Jr.

"I do not know the way to God,
Else I would have gone to complain.
O Jesus, what clothes shall I wear on this earth?
White men have no sympathy.

"I do not know the way to God,
Else I would have gone to complain.
Their voices are harsh and their eyes are not kind;
White men have no sympathy."

THIS is the song of a blind African minstrel. The man who recorded it on tape for the Central African Broadcasting Service could not understand the native language in which the old man sang it; and by the time he had it translated, the ragged bard was gone. Yet there on his tape was the voice of Africa today: yearning, groping, filled with wistful faith — and bitterness.

The world is resounding with that voice just now in the United Nations; in the jungles and savannah of the vast continent that once was called "dark"; and in the consciences of white peoples, who wonder if indeed they are without sympathy. How shall a Christian hear this cry? How shall he face the struggle of this great continent? Surely we must reflect on this today; and, as certainly, there is some part each one of us can play — because of our share in Christ — in the tumultuous affairs of our time.

First of all, there is something a Christian can say to the African minstrel, right here at the beginning. That is that he, and most of Africa with him, is mistaken in thinking that race is the heart of the problem. It is not because men are white that their voices are harsh and their eyes unkind. To their enemies, the hostile mien of the Baluba tribesmen is just as fierce. Black man and white were both once allied in the traffic of slaves. Both are equally sinners in the face of the just will of God. And if we white people have been guilty of racial pride — and Christians must confess that sin even to this day — then how foolish are Africans who emulate our sin and talk of the Black Continent for black men only.

The racial cloak is a size too small to clothe the swelling continent, as people in the Congo discovered when, among the UN forces, Berbers appeared, sandy-haired and ruddy, yet African-born from the dawn of history. Were these troops from Tunis to be stoned because their skin was white?

It's a curious thing how ever since Hitler, and long before, we allow the irrelevancy of race to becloud not only the realities of the world, but even the love of God. To illustrate, in the summer of 1959 I had the privilege of traveling to Ghana in company with a distinguished group of American Negro leaders who, like myself, were to attend the ceremonies attendant upon the inauguration of the former Gold Coast as a republic and Mr. Nkrumah as its first president. To me it was a deeply moving experience to behold the hope and eager excitement with which my companions looked forward to this signal event in the life of an African nation. It was almost as if I had been led, ever so gently, across the barrier of uncomprehending ignorance that so often divides the races here in the United States; and allowed to glimpse the pent-up frustration of generations of American Negroes who have never been quite altogether free; and to feel the vicarious joy with which they contemplated the complete freedom of other members of their race, in Africa.

The plane on which we crossed was loaded with Negro correspondents of little Southern newspapers, whose remote readers had sent them to learn at first hand what true liberty was like for men with skin like theirs. There was a rosy glow in that plane — a kind of happy racial idealism — that was warming to see; but it ill-comported with the actual facts of African life, as the Congo outbreak was soon to prove. And my Negro friends quickly found when we arrived in Ghana that for all their dreams of black brotherhood, they were still as mundanely American as ever, and were considered so by the citizens of other nations there.

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For race is not the binding reality of Africa, but freedom — freedom and the economic struggle. As a Ghanaian friend pointed out to me, there are many races native to Africa — not just black, but brown, and tan, and copper, and even white. And in God's sight all these peoples are made equally in the holy image, destined to be free as he who created them is free. This is the first thing a Christian must see and say as he faces Africa — for it is God's will. And we Western men must bow our heads in sorrow before the blind minstrel of Africa, for our own guilt before God, yet bear our forgiven witness still that God loves all alike.

Independence is the blazing fire that has ignited this great continent. But economic insecurity is the other reality that welds it together. Beginning with the soil itself — leached of minerals by the scorching sun, desert dry in arid places, or moldy dank in the rain forest — it is hard for most Africans just to get enough to eat. So little of his struggle for life has ever been really organized. Tribal bounds have kept the plots small. The sharing of skills has been forestalled by the lack of common language or trust. And so often the colonizer who might have taught him preferred, like the Belgians, to play God and do it all himself, leaving the African in ignorance and dependency, tragically adrift when the European pulled out.

In this sphere, too, the Christian has a part to play. How wrong it is to leave economics to traders only — with or without a God in their saddlebags and a conscience in their breasts. For surely the Lord is Lord of life in its wholeness, and Jesus put on the swaddling clothes of a human child just because God cared. For more than a century Christians have gone to Africa to carry better seeds to farmers, better books to children, medicine to the sick, and the aspiration of liberty and dignity to men and women. Indeed, much of the heritage of education and medical care now administered by newborn states was first spawned on the African continent by Christian concern. Yet it must be said that when you add all the missionary activity of all the churches together, it is still wholly inadequate. The scale is too small; the continent too big; the urgency too desperate. Help must be mobilized on a scale more vast, and decisions made on the level of governments — not just in one little missionary compound. In this, the Christian church has a role to play through her members who are also public servants.

I don't know the name of the British governor general who held the reigns of rule in the Gold Coast years ago when the cocoa tree was introduced to that colony. When it was discovered that the little tree would flourish there, and that there was a great deal of money to be made from the cocoa bean, there was no dearth of Englishmen who thought to set up huge plantations, using native labor as in the South Africa diamond mines, and milking off the profits to their own benefit. However, the governor general, with rare insight, declared that in his opinion the plantation-system in the long run benefited neither the natives who worked it, nor the foreign owners who came to be hated for exploiting it. So he forbade his countrymen to own land at all, with the result that Ghanaian farmers themselves now raise on their own little plots more than half of the world's cocoa; and from the organized sale of this crop the British left one hundred million pounds to start off their erstwhile colony on the road to economic solvency. There, in the person of that wise governor, was the church at work. Would that the same Christian sense of stewardship had likewise informed the former administration of other territories, whose legacy from the past is today very different. But at least we Christian citizens of nations which are in a position still to help can see to it that a plan with something of the same foresight is carried out, through the good offices of the United Nations.

One of the tragic possibilities in Africa today is that many of the newly risen leaders, most of whom are sincere democrats, genuinely striving for their peoples' welfare, will be discredited if they fail to provide results for their peoples' expectations. How can they build indigenous industries, however, unless someone will trust them enough to invest seed capital to start the new wheels turning? How can they insure peace and the rule of law, until they build schools and train their populace? But that takes money, too. Yet if they fail in these things, anarchy and tribal chaos is bound to ensue, and good leaders are sure to be replaced by demagogues and charlatans. Congo anarchy is a pool that is bound to spread. Let it never be said that such a conclusion came for lack of our support or care! Was it not St. Paul who said, "Ye are members one of another in Christ"?

Never was the Apostle's saying more touchingly illustrated for me than by a little incident that befell my wife and me in a mission school among the Ashanti tribes of Ghana. We had gone some two hundred miles north from the coast to visit the jungle compound where Anglican sisters provided first-class education for more than a thousand girls. It was after tea one day that three shy little girls came to conduct us to their primary department, where the children wished to sing some of their beautiful tribal songs for us. All of Africa was in the shy yet smiling eyes of our observant little guides; and with a movement of infinitely simple trust, they stepped forward and took our hands in theirs, to lead us. Who could not have responded to the courage of that loving act, which by a single gesture brushed aside the barrier that divided their lives from those of two big white people from ever-so-far away. Theirs was an act of utter love, and perhaps a symbol too: a

symbol of all that Africa has for us to learn. Once it was we in the West who played the self-satisfying role of taking our "little brown brothers" by the hand — and God forgive us some of the places we led them: to cotton plantations in the South, and diamond mines in South Africa, and a sense of inferiority that ached in a minstrel's heart. But now it may well be these young peoples who take our tired old hands in theirs, to share their courage with us, and their trusting love as well, if we are but humble enough to accept so great a gift.

Oh, yes, there are hard days ahead for Africa. There will be leaders whose new-found power will blind their vision and corrupt their judgment. There will be common people kindled in the passion of bitterness to bloodshed against the arrogance of pagan apartheid. No doubt there will be much unrest arising from economic distress and political dislocation. Yet there will remain the people of that great continent — "one of the great branches of God's family," as Lord Hailsham put it at the Ghana celebration. The task to which God calls each of us is simply to (1) know that these men are our brothers; (2) understand and forgive their failures, as God grant they may forgive us ours; (3) keep open our communication with them; and (4) send what help we can through new and bold agencies established for the purpose; and, finally, that we shall pray for them — using, for want of any others, the words of a prayer written by Father Huddleston, the Anglican priest who was forced out of South Africa but who is now to return as the choice of his faithful friends in East Africa to be their bishop. Let us bow our heads in his prayer:

"God bless Africa.
Guard her children;
Guide her rulers;
And give her peace,
for Jesus Christ's sake." Amen.

Thoughts on Preaching

Special comments by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick on students' sermons, as recalled, thirty-five years later, by one of the students: the Reverend William F. Hastings, First Congregational Church, Hudson, Michigan.

✚ LET the skeleton stick out! Tell your congregation where you are going. Before you turn a corner, flash a light on the street sign.

✚ A SERMON ends like a spear point, not like a broom.

✚ DON'T raise more rabbits than you can run down.

✚ OUR sermon introductions are often too long; sometimes it is better to throw away one altogether and then begin *in medias res.*

✚ UNDERSTATEMENT is always more effective than overstatement.

✚ WHEN I am stalled in preparing a sermon, I sit down quietly and ask, 'Fosdick, what does this mean to you in terms of your own experience?'

✚ DON'T misquote; don't miscredit a quotation; don't guess about any scientific or historical fact or biblical reference: look it up.

✚ YOU should be able in one sentence to state the aim of every sermon.

✚ PREACHING is sometimes like trying to put drops into someone's eyes out of a ten-story window.

✚ PLAY fair with your text; don't wrest it out of context.

✚ ANY Sunday you are willing to talk about the man in the pew and his problems, he will be willing to listen. Sometimes you can ask permission to speak to a selected group within the congregation: the young, the married, the elderly, the lonely, etc.

✚ PREACH to the class and to me, never to an imaginary congregation. This should be a real, not an artificial preaching situation. I will never give any man an 'A' unless he makes me want to be a better man.

✚ YOU are preaching for a verdict; you always try to get your congregation to do something or believe something.

A Tragic Figure Endlessly Repeated

The Man Who Might Have Been

By Thomas S. Kepler

Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me. . . . 2 Timothy 4:10

IN skillful fashion the New Testament gives us a portrait of an intriguing character, a man by the name of Demas, companion of Paul. In two sentences we catch a quickly moving glance of this figure. While imprisoned at Rome, Paul writes to Philemon, "Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers." And again in 2 Timothy, "Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica." Only two short lines left for the centuries regarding Demas, but what a story they tell!

Demas is the most tragic figure of the New Testament, even more tragic than Judas. We can extend pity for Judas, because he was a loyal Judean who acted from his sense of duty in pointing out Jesus to Jewish authorities. But Demas was different. He was a man who might have been one of the heroic figures of the New Testament. Instead, he allowed petty principles to interfere with his life and after his desertion of Paul was lost to the ages.

Paul, Luke, Mark — they remained true to Christianity to the end of their lives. They are numbered among the Christian heroes and writers. We read from the Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of Luke, the Book of Acts, the letters of Paul. These men not only made early Christian history, they wrote it as well for the centuries. But Demas, poor soul, forsook Christianity; then the values of Christianity forsook him. He too might have lived and written as one of the truly great of the early Christians. But instead, we can merely depict him as "the man who might have been."

Loss of Intellectual Confidence

It is true that we do not know much about Demas, but we do know a great deal about ourselves. We do not have a great amount of knowledge about the immediate problems which affected Demas' desertion of Paul, but we do have information about the factors which cause disloyalties in ourselves. We are certain that the moral and spiritual laws which are effective today were effective in the same way in the first century. Consequently, as we try to see Demas through ourselves, we can understand why Demas lost his enthusiasm for Christianity and his devotion to Paul.

Perhaps Demas had lost his intellectual confidence in Jesus. As a young man he was thrilled to follow Jesus, whose religion in a few short years had turned the Mediterranean "world upside down." Even after Jesus' death, Jesus' followers had been convinced by the resurrection experiences that he was the Lord of the new age. How intriguing it was for the youthful Demas to join these early Christians. New movements always give such a glow at first. But now — well, things were a bit different. Youthful feelings often cool when the realities of middle age creep in. A dozen years can change one's attitude intensely, as is evidenced in the case of Demas.

With the advent of Nero's persecutions, it was no longer easy to be a Christian unless a person was certain Christianity was worth suffering for. As Demas saw many of his Christian friends persecuted under Nero, he began to wonder if it were really worthwhile to remain a Christian, especially when his mind was in query about Jesus.

Demas was like an acquaintance of mine who had decided in his college days that he would study for the ministry. But when he went to a theological seminary, where he studied critically and carefully about the person of Jesus, he could not make the mental shift from orthodoxy to constructive

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modernism without losing his earlier loyalties to Jesus. Hence, he left seminary for another vocation than that of Christian minister.

Yet what a contrast Demas presents to my friend Peter Brunner, of Heidelberg University, who holds his theological doctorates from Harvard and a German university, who also spent a year at the Sorbonne in philosophical study. Dr. Brunner, as a theological teacher in Giessen University, would not bow to Hitler and the swastika. For such disloyalty he was sent to a concentration camp for eighteen months. When released, he and other theological friends on Reformation Sunday preached sermons — which were printed together in a book — that they would still remain loyal to the cross, since they saw in the swastika of Hitler only that which was contrary to Christian love. Persecution and travail could not shift the intellectual confidence which Peter Brunner and his friends had in the person of Jesus. They knew wherein their faith was founded. In this way they differed from Demas.

Demas had not as yet learned that Christianity is a way of life which ought to support one in time of difficulty; it is not something that must be supported by frail, outmoded doctrines. He should have known that theologies change and grow and that if one's experience of God is simultaneously growing, the shift in these theological ideas is welcome. Paul's thinking should have taught Demas this fact, for Paul is in sharp contrast to Demas. Says Paul, finding his religion supporting him in his cell at Rome, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. . . . I can do all things through him who strengtheneth me."

There is the story of the old German schoolmaster who had over his study door these words, "Dante, Molière, Goethe live here." These literary giants lived so deeply in the life of the old teacher that he warmly understood their companionship, just as Paul appreciated Jesus. But Demas as a Christian devotee had not learned that life is deeper than logic. Thus, when the logic of his doctrines about Jesus began to break, his loyalty to the cause of Jesus likewise waned. He had forgotten that doctrines should emerge from one's religious experience. Instead he had surmised that dogmas, in which one believed, were basic, even though apart from the warmth of experience. Hence, he became a New Testament tragedy.

Tired of Being a Member of a Minority Group

Demas may have grown weary of participating in a minority movement. Those who stand courageously against the calloused crowd are frequently aware of their loneliness. As Leonardo da Vinci expressed their feeling, they are "lonely figures in the center of culture." In critical times the sense of loneliness is accompanied by a feeling of danger, because minorities in carrying their banners out in front of the crowd sense the rebellion of the masses. The populace, in their lethargy and love of the status quo, hate to be disturbed. Such is true today; it was true in Demas' age.

The Romans had crucified Jesus; the Jews had stoned Stephen; Paul's life might soon be taken after a trial before Caesar. Certainly these early Christians, as members of a minority group, had not found life complacent. If a person in any age wants safety as a criterion of a worthily lived life, he had better join the masses. He may not be happier, but he will at least be safer. The masses forced Socrates to drink of the hemlock cup, because they said he was upsetting the thinking of the Athenian youth. The masses burned Bruno at the stake, because he joined with Galileo and Copernicus in disagreeing with the thoughts of Aristotelian-Ptolemeian science. They killed Jesus, because he would not subscribe to temple forms as the center of religion in an age when the Roman problem was alert. Although the minorities today determine tomorrow's culture, a cross usually accompanies their efforts.

Minority groups are unsafe in any age. Demas knew this fact. Hence, he quit the companionship of Paul because love of his own physical existence was greater than his feeling of loyalty to Christianity. However, I cannot lose hope in Demas, for I have confidence that there are good potentialities in all individuals. I am confident that, were Demas with us today, we could appeal to his loyalty by telling him that the masses are people of sixth-grade intelligence. I am certain that he would thrill to know that our age calls Socrates "the father of philosophy," that Italy in the nineteenth century erected a monument to Bruno, that Jesus today is called "the light of the world" as well as "the hope of the world." I am positive that Demas would appreciate membership in a heritage with Socrates, Bruno and Jesus, rather than being counted among the "following crowd," if he had our perspective of the centuries.

Einstein made the statement several years ago that world peace could be a reality if two per cent of the people would actually work for it. Later, this Jewish thinker referred to the Christian church as *the one institution* where the ideals of the minority could sway civilization. Statistics taken among churches throughout the United States show that but one fourth of our Protestant church members attend services on Sunday. However, if only one fourth of the eight hundred million Christians in the world would stand courageously for Christian ideals, world Christianity could in time stamp out war, materialism, greed, social unrest, international tension.

Christianity started as a minority movement. Throughout nineteen centuries of history it has had only the minorities on its side. Yet the

influence of those minorities has been the most creative means by which God, through them, has been able to work in history. Said Jesus to his first followers, "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened." His disciples answer through the centuries, "This leaven is still working effectively through a devoted group of men and women called thy followers. As a minority group we have often been called heretics in our own era, but later eras have frequently referred to us as saints!"

Living in this difficult hour, I can almost vision a man like Demas aligning himself with Christian minorities, if he had our long perspective of Christianity's influence over nineteen centuries instead of only three decades. I can imagine him grow thoughtful as he listens to the poet's query:

> Speak, History! who are Life's victors?
> Unroll thy long annals and say,
> Are they those whom the world called the victors?
> who won the success of a day?
> The martyrs, or Nero? The Spartans who fell at
> Thermopylae's tryst,
> Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges, or Socrates?
> Pilate, or Christ?[1]

If Demas had had our knowledge of the value of Christianity through the centuries, he might have remained loyal to Paul and the Christian cause. I somehow feel that he was potentially big enough to belong to the minorities.

Submerged by Paul

As we see Demas once more through ourselves, we analyze Demas as a man of potential greatness who lacked the dignity and loyalty to stand in second place to Paul. In Thessalonica, Demas was the leader of the Christians; all activity and organization centered about him; his name was on the tongue of every Thessalonian as a man of spiritual prestige. But in Rome the setting was different. Demas heard Paul's name sung from all quarters of the capital city. Demas was just another ordinary figure among the many friends of Paul who had come to Rome to see him. As the halo about Demas began to disappear, he found that his love for Christ languished also. He began to feel that the enjoyment he had possessed in the Christian movement was largely due to the attention he had been given by his fellow Christians. In Thessalonica he had not only won crowds, but had also won his own egoism. But now, as he stood next to Paul, he was forced to take second place. He could no longer stand his sense of inferiority as he stood by Paul; hence he forsook Paul.

Demas had forgotten that when a person seeks the headlines for himself he not only loses the key to Christianity, he also loses the key to mental health. Self-forgetfulness, rather than self-centeredness, is the central note in Christian thinking. Said Jesus, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." About the one who said these words Paul wrote, as he sought the Philippians to forsake their pride and self-centeredness: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, . . . he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Had Demas remembered Jesus' words or had he listened to Paul's admonitions as they talked together at Rome, he might have had a different career. But Demas was self-centered and self-centeredness is a type of disease which alters clarity of thinking. Tolstoy suffered from this malady, but he saw its cure. Countess Alexandra Tolstoy writes about her father in *The Tragedy of Tolstoy,* "I remember father saying repeatedly that insanity is egotism carried to its extreme: a person concentrates all his thoughts on himself. 'The more I look at them,' he said, 'the more I become convinced that properly speaking, all people are abnormal; it is a question of degree. A truly religious man who has a foundation in life never can quite lose his mind.' "[2]

Demas did not "lose his mind" in his desire for first place, but he did lose the joy and strength which accompanies Christian concern for others. Saints have been described as individuals who have "stopped bothering about themselves." What a pity Demas could not have learned this note from Paul, Mark and Luke! "St. Demas" today would find congenial fellowship with St. Paul, St. Mark, St. Luke. What a tragedy Demas could not have caught the spirit of *one who was greater than a saint!* How different those last years of his existence might have been had he been able in his relation to Paul, to heed Goethe's wisdom, "Against the great superiority of another there is no remedy but love." Had Demas caught this note he might have been a great man!

The person who wants headlines for himself suffers from an inferiority complex. He lacks inner self-certainty; hence he wishes to bolster his exterior. What he lacks in character he wishes to supplement in reputation. As Mairet has well expressed this difficulty, "Egoism in all its innumerable forms is the attempt of the individual to compensate for an illusory loss of individuality." Losing his sense of individuality as he stood next to Paul, Demas sought compensation for himself by deserting Christianity. Known among the Roman Christians as a man who had lost his faith, Demas could feel himself more discussed as a central figure than had he remained loyal as one of the group

[1] William W. Story, "Io Victis."

[2] Countess Alexandra Tolstoy, *The Tragedy of Tolstoy* (Yale University Press, 1933). Used by permission.

who was submerged by Paul. Back once again in Thessalonica, Demas, labeled as one who had backslidden into pagan mediocrity, would receive sufficient attention to compensate for his abnegation of Christian leadership at Rome. But in so doing he sacrificed not only a title role among the leading New Testament figures of the first century, but also the continuing joy which the Christian religion could have given him during the remaining years of his life. A man who might have become a saint became a tragedy!

Let Us Now Look at Ourselves

We have now analyzed Demas. In so doing, we have also evaluated our own selves. There is nothing we can do for Demas; there is much we can effect to strengthen our own Christian loyalties. "Christianity," according to Baron von Hügel, "taught us to care." Loyalty to Christian ideals is the means by which God's grace shows us the meaning of the abundant life. Loyalty to kingdom living teaches us to care for humanity as God's family; even more, it makes it possible for God to care more naturally and powerfully for us as his children. It makes us understand what Jung has called "the great wisdom of life which for two thousand years has proven efficacious."

Years ago I learned a poem which has been constantly recurring in my memory as I have been thinking about Demas:

> Across the fields of yesterday
> He sometimes comes to me,
> A little lad just back from play —
> The lad I used to be.
>
> And yet he smiles so wistfully
> Once he has crept within,
> I wonder if he hopes to see
> The man I might have been.[3]

I wonder how Demas would have felt had he repeated this poem to himself several years after his desertion of Paul and the kingdom cause? I am even more concerned about the effect it has on us today as we think on its words. One thing I do know! A religion of meaningful depth can save one from responding to such a poem with an answer of disillusionment.

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[3] From *Shadow of the Perfect Rose,* Collected Poems of Thomas S. Jones, Jr. With Memoir and notes by John L. Foley. Copyright 1937 by John L. Foley. Reprinted by permission of Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

A Prayer

ALMIGHTY GOD, hear our prayer and save us from all forgetfulness of thee. For thou didst make heaven and earth. By thy command life stood forth and man was set in the midst. Thou didst establish us in freedom and endow us with energy and sense and mind. At thy behest we have been fruitful and have established our rule over the earth; we have made a history and built cities and nations, and developed culture and science. But all too often, O Lord, we cry, "Great are the achievements of man" instead of praising thee that thou hast given us a place and a participation within thy great achievements.

Grant that we forget not that thou hast shared in all of man's struggles to achieve value. Thine has been the encouragement with which men have set out on the high adventures of discovery. Whenever there has been discontent with mediocrity and lower levels of existence, surely it has been a divine spirit that urged us forward. Thine has been the aspiration that sets the hearts of men toward great ideals for themselves and for society. Thine too has been the spirit which nerves us to accept the labors of the creative arts.

Surely we are thy children, sons and daughters of our Creator God, when we strive to achieve new statements by which truth is heard more clearly, new deeds by which righteousness is upheld and new designs whereby our visions of beauty are revised and enlarged. Thou, O Lord, art thyself the great example of creative persistence until thine own nature was made clear. By thy teachings of old thou didst prepare the mind and heart of man. In the fullness of time thou didst send thy Son in whom was achieved the full expression of thine unending love for man and the world.

Grant that each of us may so persevere that whatever of holiness is in us may bless our world. Teach us neither to fear holiness nor to despair of its triumph in us. Remind us that the very depths of our frustration are but the countermeasure of the virtue thou wouldst have us achieve. Even into the agony of the darkness the ecstasy of the light of thy countenance may shine, whereby we take our steps toward a new and nobler life and see afar off the goal of the holy city which is the triumph of our labors, the crown of thy creation and our share in thine eternal glory. Amen. — *W. Barnett Blakemore, dean of Disciples Divinity House and associate dean of Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, University of Chicago.*

The Victim of the Jericho Road

By Kenneth I. Brown

THE victim himself is nameless. Jesus called him "a certain man." The only name he has in history is that: Certain Man. He is without nationality, although the assumption is that he was a Jew. We know the direction of his traveling: he was going eastward from Jerusalem down to Jericho. Why he was leaving Jerusalem or why he wanted to go to Jericho — one of the hottest cities of the Near East — we are not told.

We do not know his age, although we may note that his self-defense did not suggest vigorous youth. We do not know whether he was walking, or riding a donkey. We do not know whether he was wealthy or poor; however, the absence of any mention of a wallet or money suggests that he was not one of great affluence.

Jesus said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him [The Revised Standard Version says "and beat him"] and departed, leaving him half dead."

Presumably the thieves took everything of worth, but the text mentions only his clothes. As for the beating, perhaps the thieves, in anger and disappointment because they found no wallet, whipped him to vent their spleen.

There he lies, naked, wounded, semiconscious, parched with thirst, without food. The procession starts, for the world moves by him as he lies there — moves by Certain Man.

Simone Weil, the young Frenchwoman who comes to us through her posthumous writings as an unchurched saint, comments that Certain Man, as he lay there in his suffering, was completely anonymous. He was humanity, without a name. And it was this anonymity which brought the Samaritan's compassion close to universal love. The Samaritan's act was not done from friendship, for he didn't know the man. It was done from love, shared impartially and without respect to particulars such as color or race or creed or even appealing attractiveness.

Perhaps, in his semiconscious state, Certain Man did not know that the Levite was going by. When the priest "passed by on the other side" perhaps Certain Man was too involved in his own suffering to care.

Then the Samaritan comes, with his ministry of kindness. Certain Man raises his eyes to the Samaritan whose heart went out in compassion to the unknown, unfortunate fellow by the side of the road.

The record says: "He went to him and bound up his wounds (apparently, first aid was Certain Man's immediate need), pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." The last is revealing: the good Samaritan was not simply a kind heart that was willing to pay the bill; he gave of himself and his personal care.

The record continues: "And on the morn when he departed, he took out two denarii [Scholars tell us that a denarius was worth about a fair day's wage; with two denarii, the innkeeper was well provided for several days' compensation for his unexpected guest.] and gave them to the host, and said unto him, 'Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.'"

We do not know how long it took Certain Man's wounds to heal. We do not know how long he lingered at the inn. We do not know when he left, and whether he continued his journey to Jericho or turned back to Jerusalem. There is so much we do not know!

We do not know whether the two denarii were sufficient to pay the full bill. We do not know what took place between the innkeeper and the Samaritan when he did return. The critic of today may be forgiven a measure of cynicism if he speculates whether the innkeeper was himself an honest sort or, like some innkeepers of today, willing to see the possibility of extra profit in a bill which the Samaritan would find it hard to check.

But back to Certain Man. We may wonder if that unpleasant experience made any dent on his spirit. Did he remember it for the hurt of the wounds and the brutality of the robbers or, first, for the kindliness of the passer-by who saved the day? Did the total experience leave any lasting imprint on the man-he-was? And, if it did, what was the shape of the imprint?

Still more may we wonder what was the sequel to Certain Man's adventure when he left the inn. There are three possible continuations of that ancient story.

I

Certain Man looked at the innkeeper with incredulity: "You mean that that fellow who brought me here paid the bill? All of it? And I don't owe you anything? You're lying. No, no, you wouldn't lie in that direction. But I don't know who he was, not even his name. Well, thanks, thanks indeed. I'll get along, although I am still pretty stiff from that cut in my leg and the gash in my neck. I'll have to rest along the way, but I think I can make it."

Awkwardly, because of his stiff leg, he stepped over the threshold of the inn. But his thoughts were not on his awkwardness. He was thinking of the incredible man — a complete stranger — whom chance had brought his way that hour a few days previous when he had been at the mercy of the robbers. Certain Man confessed that he could never see himself giving aid to a fellow he didn't know. Even paying his bills — that was just plain silly! Mercy is a good enough thing, but there are reasonable limits. Why should he put out his own good money for the inn bill and then leave without any arrangements for repaying?

Instinctively, Certain Man searched for any possible mercenary motive that the Samaritan might have had, but he

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KENNETH IRVING BROWN, *after a decade with the Danforth Foundation, St. Louis, Missouri, as its executive director, retired on May 1, 1961. Dr. Brown had previously served as president of Hiram College (1930—40) and president of Denison University (1940—50). Retirement for this American Baptist layman will be active: Dr. Brown has planned a full schedule of writing, lecturing and travel, and will leave in mid-July on a five or six month trip to Africa to observe the educational patterns of the African countries and to gain first-hand acquaintance with Christian missions in the field.*

could find none. The chances of their meeting again were slight. Even if they met, the worst the Samaritan could demand was that he be repaid denarius for denarius, and although Certain Man had, at the moment, no denarii on him, he would, if forced — particularly if compelled by law — find enough to repay his benefactor.

But the utter unlikelihood of a human being showing forth this pattern of kindness was something that Certain Man could not comprehend, and nowhere in his heart did he find any real desire to comprehend. He shuffled along the dusty road, his bare toes stirring little furrows of dust. Maybe the innkeeper had made a mistake. Maybe it would be well to get far away from the inn immediately — just in case.

Certain Man was absorbed in thought: "Queer guy, queer guy! Maybe the heat hurt his head — but I'm sure glad he came along when he did."

II

Certain Man turned aside from the innkeeper's table, saying for the third time: "You're sure you don't know his name? He's never been here before? You're positive? But he did say he would come back? I'd wait just to thank him if I were sure he would come soon, but I can't repay him in money — not just now. I haven't got a denarius on me, as you know. But there is a job down at Jericho if I can get there. I must go on, but I should so like to see him again. I'll never forget all he did. I only half know, for I was scarcely conscious, but I can remember when he poured the oil on my leg and on the wound in my neck. It felt so cool. And he held me on his donkey when I didn't have the strength to sit straight. That first night I was delirious, I remember. I think I must have raved and shouted — you say I did? I thought the thieves were at me again. I could feel their kicks in my back, and the strokes of their rods. But he sat by me all through the darkness and I could hear his quiet voice. It was like the sound of water from far off — something reassuring and peaceful. I'm not sure I would be alive today if — and to think I don't know who he is. I'd like so much to thank him, to take his hand. What's that you say? You think he was a Samaritan? Well, as a Jew, I don't love Samaritans, but I would sure like to thank this one. Samaritan or not, he was good. It makes you realize that some good can come out even of Samaria! I suppose that underneath our color and race there is a common humanity. That's what our prophets taught, but we pay so little attention to them these days. Lots of the boys and girls in our neighborhood don't even go to the synagogue.

"I'll leave a note for him, but you'll have to write it for me. I can't write. Give him my name and say I am grateful. Say I will repay him if he will let me know where to reach him. I want to thank him, you know. I want to thank him very, very much. I am truly, truly grateful to him.

"If I only had his name I'd leave word in Jericho and Jerusalem. Tall, you say? Dark eyes? Small beard? What was he wearing? Well, I can scarcely identify him from that, can I?

"Well, I'll go on. My leg bothers me, but with occasional rest I can make it, and I think we've got the bleeding in my neck stopped. I'll start my search for him and some day, when I find him, I'll tell him how grateful I am to him."

Certain Man started on his way. He had not gone far when, ahead on the road, he discerned motion. Obviously it was a disturbance of some kind. Certain Man had no desire to be involved in another man's quarrel and he slowed his pace. If there had been a branch road he would have turned aside. As he came nearer he saw that the rumpus was only a tumbling of boys — three of them — and the two older ones were laying hard hands upon the younger and weaker one.

Certain Man was concentrating on his benefactor: "I must find him some day. I must. I must tell him my thanks."

One of the older boys was holding the younger one on the ground, pinning him there by kneeling on the younger boy's legs and placing his hands on the boy's shoulders. The second older boy, in a frenzy of anger, was striking the younger one.

Certain Man was shocked by what he saw and heard. His first impulse was to throw off the two rascals and rescue the younger. Although weak from his accident, he had the necessary strength. The second impulse was a stronger one: this was none of his quarrel. Boys are little devils. They're born that way. What can you do? Stop them now and as soon as his back was turned they'd be at it again. And too, the thought uppermost in his mind: he must seek out his benefactor, that was his job. He must find him and say his heartfelt thanks.

Certain Man turned slowly away from the quarreling boys. Awkwardly, he limped on toward Jericho.

III

Certain Man was talking to the innkeeper. "You tell me that he cared for my entire expense and more too? I find such kindness hard to believe. I have never known it before. And you, too, sir, are kind. What can I ever do to repay you both? I do not know his name or his city.

"His kindness puts a heavy burden on me. Do not look surprised. It is a burden I shall gladly bear. You do not understand me? I mean that his kindness obligates me to equal kindness. I may not be able to pay my kindness to him. So seldom are we able to pay our debts to those to whom we are indebted. I think of our debts to our parents which we pay not to them but to our children. They, in turn, pay what they owe us to our grandchildren.

"This friend whose name I do not know has saved my life. Still greater — for my life is not of much account — he gave me the gift of his love. My debt is large, very large. I shall be all my life paying it, whether I be rich or poor. My friend, do not look at me with such surprise. Life is like that."

Certain Man picked up the heavy stick he had cut to support him in his walking. *"Salaam aleikum, aleikum, is-salaam."* Certain Man slowly touched his forehead, his mouth, his heart, and then moved on toward the road.

He had not gone far when something ahead caught his attention. He strained to see. Was he seeing true? It was a man struggling with another. The memory of his own recent experience flooded his mind.

Without conscious thought, Certain Man started running, running as fast as his labored leg would permit. But more important, he started shouting, shouting a wild, fearsome cry. As a boy when he and his friends had roamed the hills they had practiced the Bedouin calls — eerie and frightening to those who are not accustomed to them.

The attacker raised his head, then scrambled to his feet. Certain Man saw and increased the murderousness of his cries. The attacker stood uncertain, hesitant for a moment; then he dove for the escape which a brown wadi and the twisting hills offered him.

Certain Man reached the stranger on the road. "You are hurt." The stranger shook his head. Certain Man bent to help him to his feet. "It's lucky for you I came just now. Fate may have had a hand for both of us. That dangerous young man took advantage of your traveling alone. Sprang out from behind those rocks, you say? You were putting up a good fight but you had no chance against his young strength and his heavy club. Ah, there's your purse in the dust. He didn't take it with him. That's a beautiful cloak you're wearing, with its handsome stripes. I can believe he was trying to get it from you when he heard my cry. Friend, it's not safe to be traveling this road alone. I know. Others warned you?"

The two men walked in silence.

"It's just not safe to travel this road. I'm a member of the Jerusalem Rotary Club. Perhaps our group could help by asking that gendarmes be posted for protection. Fine, fine. Then, as the assistant editorial writer for the *Jericho Bugle*, you could demand action. We'll get others to help.

"You probably have too many clubs in Jericho already, just as we have in Jerusalem. My sister-in-law is always going to some club meeting. But what say, if you and I start one more? We'll

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"You see, only a few days ago, I was coming down from Jerusalem when I fell among thieves, who stripped me. . . ." Certain Man's words were inaudible as the two men, the stranger leaning on his shoulder for support, moved into the dusty mist of distance.

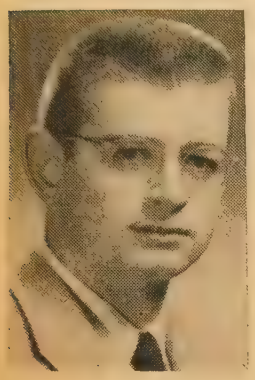
IV

"Which of these three responses on the part of Certain Man do you think shows the gratitude that life demands from us?" The young Master was asking the question.

The young lawyer answered quickly: "The last, to be sure. That where Certain Man tries to pay his debt to others, even though he may never find the Samaritan to repay him personally. There are obligations and gifts in life which must be repaid. And much of the time we cannot bring our thanks to those to whom they are due and so we pass them on to others."

The Master spoke, and there was kindliness in his voice: "Thou hast well said; go thou and do likewise."

Among Us—



A Young Minister's Dilemma

By Daniel C. Reuter

TWO magazines came to my mailbox today. In one of them there is an article which reminds me and all pastors that laymen want and need systematic pastoral calling. All other gifts and failings of the minister are beside the point, it seems. Systematic calling on the church's membership is the "one thing needful."

On the other hand, the second publication contains an article taking local churches to task for ministering solely "to the conscious needs and interests of their own members." This article goes on to urge the necessity of relating the church's total work to the weekday lives and, especially, the jobs of its members and of others in the community. It concludes by saying what has become a commonplace of *avant-garde* thinking about the local church: "We need to rethink the ministry of the ministers within the context of the total ministry of the church . . . which includes the ministry of the laity as well."

But a weary sigh may be understood if not excused as it comes from the writer, a minister of a small (less than 200 members) church in a very small town. Like most such churches, it has an aging membership of people who recall the "good, old days" when such communities made up the backbone of American life. Unlike many communities of this sort, though, this one is relatively prosperous and feels no compulsion to rethink its place in the world.

Like many ministers of such churches, the writer is young. Young ministers commonly serve small churches in small places. Nor does the obscurity of the situation bother many of us. What does tend to bother us is another problem inherent in the situation. As a recent seminary graduate the young minister has lately been exposed daily to the challenges of first-rate theological thinking. Fellow students have helped keep his thinking honest by their probing questions and sharp disagreements. In seminary, life was intellectually alive, whatever weaknesses there may have been in the institution or its student body.

Now this former seminary student is the minister of a church of grade-school graduates. What is expected of him is conformity to an image of the minister. This image is deeply ingrained in the minds of church members and nonchurch members alike in small-town America. The minister is the "holy man," the "reverend." His wife could be called the "reverendess" because that is what people expect her to be. There is an image for her, too.

In this situation, the young minister finds himself confronted by at least two distinct types of advice. One says, "Be loving. Don't show off your shiny, new theological education. In time you will mature and things that now seem important will appear different." This is the school of thought exemplified by the article which urges young ministers to get out and push doorbells.

The other school of thought says, "The church is largely irrelevant and sick. What people expect the minister to do is to sanctify the status quo. If you give in, you are unfaithful. Be a prophet. Defy the gods. So shall you be saved." The second article, of course, belongs to this type.

Most ministers probably heed the first group of voices. It is tempting to think that they do so because they are cowardly. But it probably is not so. Rather, the theology we ministers espouse, which is usually oriented around sin and repentance, makes us distrust ourselves. We know full well, without any beseeching "in the bowels of Christ," that we can be and often are mistaken. So many voices urge us to organize, call, spread love and cheer. We recall the loving words of Christ; we see the examples of older ministers; we feel the needs and demands of laymen. And so we ministers not only "give in," but we urge one another to do likewise.

But what if we do not "give in" (that phrase reveals the writer's inclinations)? The first thing that happens is that we feel isolated from neighboring ministers. We feel ourselves engaged in a constant battle with our own congregations. The temptation to prideful arrogance — an arrogance which can invalidate everything we do — seems overpowering. After all, if we are right, practically everyone else within reach is wrong. The ministers, the laymen, the denominational officials — it takes tremendous self-confidence to defy all these. Can we

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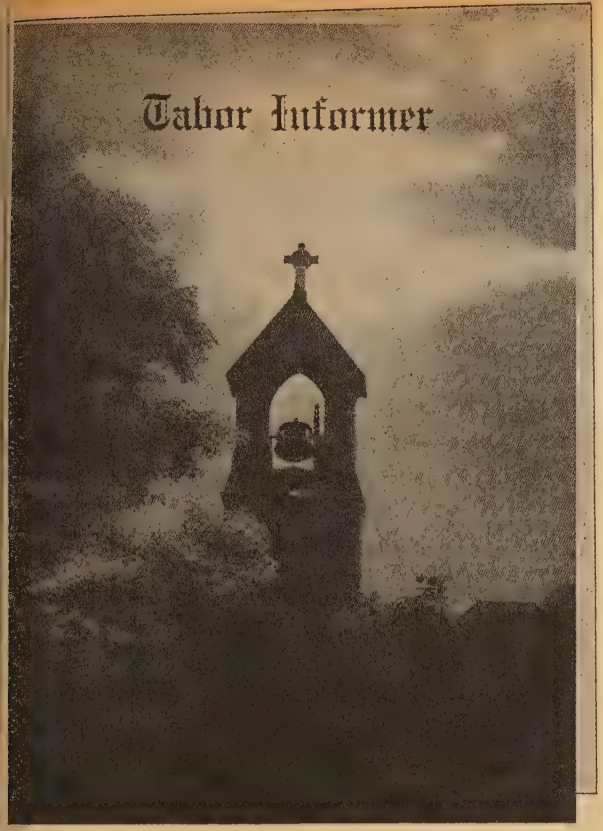
DANIEL C. REUTER, *minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Graniteville, Vermont, is a graduate of Colgate University (A.B.) and Union Theological Seminary, New York (B.D.).*



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defy them without feeling superior to them? Surely an abundance of grace is required.

Then there is the problem of what the minister does. Actually, day by day, what do you do with your time? You can, of course, do most of what is expected of you on the theory that you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. But many of us are not strong enough to keep the fly-catching purpose of the church's activities in mind. The activities become central for us, as they are for nearly eveyone else we see. Besides, if the criticisms of local church life as irrelevant and self-centered are valid, then the organizing of choirs and youth groups, the pressure-building of Sunday schools, the soothing of irritations, and the routine pastoral call may be positive evils. They may prop up what God wants pulled down.

When those of us who feel the bankruptcy of the church keenly look into our own motives, however, we become terribly uncertain. How much of our dissatisfaction is caused by our own laziness or shyness or inflexibility or other personal inadequacies? Maybe the church does not need a reformation as much as it needs a new minister — or psychoanalysis for the old one.

The journals we read give us very little help. Except for those which urge us to do more calling or raise more money, most of the articles on the local church simply re-emphasize a fact that we may already grasp. It is the point of Hendrik Kraemer, of Robert Spike and of dozens of others: the Christian congregation in the New Testament is a community which ministers, witnesses and serves. Its "church work" is in the world, and it gathers together in worship as a counterpart to its dispersal in witness. But, in our society, the church is an institution which demands work and service within itself, which involves only the spare-time concerns of its members, and which relies for its distinctively Christian content on one man, the "pastoral director."

The point is clear. But this writer, with many other young ministers, simply does not know what to do about it. You can preach. But does anyone know what happens to preaching after it leaves the minister's mouth? The result is in the hands of the Holy Spirit, of course, but is that a *complete* answer for the minister? The answer is uncertain.

Again, you can teach. But there seems to have been little written about how you begin teaching people who resist the very suggestion of ideas, of words, almost of thought. It is one thing to teach the suburban man who at least respects the world of learning, even if from afar. It is another thing to teach the man who regards anything connected with schooling as "kid stuff." Once there may have been an entrée to the minds of such men and women because economic hardship made them dissatisfied with their world. With the passing of this hardship, the entrée has gone too.

Even a church which has ministers of adult education, many educated members and the advantages of urban surroundings, finds it difficult to enlist even ten per cent of its membership in serious study. Ten per cent of my congregation would be eighteen people. But with our tradition, no more than eight people have actually been enlisted in a study group. And at least half of these conceive of study in very narrow, Sunday school terms. That is, they expect to sit and be given facts and rules by the minister. So tied are we to this procedure that our people feel that no other type of group study is worthwhile at all.

So the small-town minister is driven more and more into himself, which is the denial of Calvinistic piety and the very reverse of what he claims he wants his church to be and do. It is no wonder that so many give up. They become assistants in large churches. They join special, inner-city projects. Possibly, with a perverse glee, they become board officials or religious journalists and join the ranks of the "tormentors." Or they give in to the universal expectation and become the kind of minister everybody seems to want.

Those who continue to resist tend, perhaps, to become short-term ministers who drift from place to place on the black lists of denominational administrators. Often they become bitter and petulant. They fight with their congregations and with other ministers over things that do not really matter very much. So, beginning with a high view of the ministry of the congregation, they end as petty, ecclesiastical dictators. In a way, these ministers repeat or duplicate the course of Protestant orthodoxy or fundamentalism in this century. Beginning with a large vision and an honest, even if possibly mistaken, Christian concern, they finish with what is small, mean and trivial. Is this pathos or tragedy?

This piece has wandered, insofar as it is autobiographical, almost into a slough of self-pity. Yet the situation in which many young ministers live often seems to drive them there. This is written partly in catharsis and partly to plead for help. The Holy Spirit is our comforter, surely. Christ is our one hope, yes. But the Christian community, whose most faithful and daring spirits help stimulate this dilemma, ought to expend a bit more energy on making itself creatively useful and therefore more bearable.

Otherwise, the only honest advice to the thoughtful and serious young Christian would be: "Whatever you do, do not be a minister. It is no job for a serious Christian." This should not and must not be true. But we need help to find light. In this, the writer knows he is not alone.

We are glad to offer a reprint of the article in The Christian Century of April 12 that aroused so much interest and discussion.

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Book Reviews

THE LITURGICAL RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH. *Edited by Massey Hamilton Shepherd, Jr. Oxford. $3.25.*

MANY will agree with Bishop Stephen Bayne when he observes, in the first of the collection of papers which comprise this book, that not only in the Anglican communion, of which he is now the chief executive officer, but in protestantism in general we have not yet wholly made up our mind about the Eucharist. For most of our church members it *is* an "unrelated mystery," "something that happened long ago . . . a barren parable of what men dream might some day happen . . . a mysterious priestly transaction." We see little connection between this sacrament and Christian life and witness; yet we have the vaguely uneasy feeling that this may be a mistaken view.

At the same time most of protestantism has been relatively unaware of the movement toward liturgical reform which has been attempting to reclaim, for this sacrament, a new meaning and centrality in the life of the church. There are several reasons for this unawareness. The very name of the movement, "Liturgical Reform," has made it easy to dismiss it as a mere tampering by the more liturgical churches with their own liturgies. This book shows how unfair this appraisal is, but one of the authors does note that there has been, within the movement, too much conversation limited to those who know its particular thought patterns and special vocabulary. The movement has had its greatest vigor in continental Roman Catholicism and there has been so little enthusiasm for it in Catholic circles in America that perhaps news of it can best come from non-Catholic liturgical churches. This book, which consists of papers presented at a liturgical conference in 1959 by several prominent Protestant Episcopal clergymen, two lay persons of that church, and the professor of liturgical theology of a Greek Orthodox seminary, serves as a good introduction from these sources.

A reading of this book can do much to help an "outsider" understand this movement, but as a "non-liturgical" Protestant reads he may be surprised to find that the central themes of this movement are not strange at all. There is a plea that the liturgy recapture wholehearted congregational participation and dialogue; that there be a return to "the corporate idea of worship." One paper is devoted to the biblical foundations of the Eucharist and there is a plea that worship and liturgy have a better scriptural foundation. There is also an insistence that a vital faith must issue forth in concrete, ethical behavior. (The paper by Wilford O. Cross, "Economic and Social Implications of the Eucharist," is excellent and will surprise those who consider the social gospel and liturgical reform to be poles apart.) There is the emphasis, which is fortunately heard from so many quarters today, on the ministry of the laity; a plea that the sonic barrier between minister and people be broken.

This book can serve not only as an introduction to this movement but as a means of bringing some of the movement's fresh and challenging insights about the Lord's Supper to our common life and worship. — *R. Deane Postlethwaite, Good Samaritan Methodist Church of Edina, Minneapolis, Minn.*

CHILDREN IN THE CHURCH. *By Iris V. Cully. Westminster. $3.75.*

MRS. CULLY demonstrates in this book, as she did in *The Dynamics of Christian Education,* that she is scholarly, soundly theological and theologically sound, and a wise and experienced practitioner in the field of Christian education. This volume is an extension in the area of children's work of the basic philosophy of Christian nurture she so capably set forth in *The Dynamics of Christian Education.* She begins with the child in the church, cognizant of both psychological and biblical insights into the nature of human personality. The ground in which Christian education takes place is a church, so she is concerned about a doctrine of the church and about the effect the life and practice of the whole church has on the growing child. It is in this setting that she

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discusses the means and resources we have for communicating the Christian faith to children.

There is an encouraging pressure being exerted these days upon professional Christian educators by church school teachers for greater depth in leadership training. Many teachers are aware of the superficiality of training in methods which is divorced from an understanding of the faith which we seek to communicate. They are asking for a sturdier fare which will enable them to grow as Christians rather than merely polish the techniques of teaching. The teaching church, however, can never pursue theology and Bible study unrelated to teaching method. It is this relevance which Mrs. Cully so superbly achieves. Here is a book worthy of study by clergymen and by all who teach children, individually and in groups. — *Joseph W. Baus, First Presbyterian Church, Evansville, Ind.*

ONE BODY AND ONE SPIRIT. *By Oscar J. F. Seitz. Seabury. $4.25.*

THIS book is a rich mine filled with the deposit of many years of thoughtful reflection on the origin and nature of the church. The author, a professor in an Anglican college, might have been expected to begin with the fully-developed concept of the church as Anglicans understand it, and then to proceed with an exposition of how the church came to be what it is. Surprisingly, and gratefully, he does just the opposite. In the tradition of the finest liberal scholarship, he turns to the New Testament as his textbook and searches there for the key factors which transformed the Christian fellowship from a sect within the Jewish community into a "fellowship of the spirit" which challenged the whole Roman Empire.

In one of the clearest studies of this problem we have ever seen, the author portrays the church as a "living, growing organism, constantly undergoing changes in thought and structure." He sees the guiding power within this organism as the Holy Spirit of God. He argues against the idea that the church of today should turn back to the church in the New Testament as a model to be copied, and affirms that the church in every generation must be led by the continuing witness of the Holy Spirit. It is only thus that the church can renew itself and move forward.

A satisfying feature of this book is that the author takes time to discuss important problems as they appear in his account of the emergence of the church. He faces issues honestly, leaving no doubt that it is more important to understand the full dimensions of a problem, difficult as this often is, than to defend a particular point of view. Thus, there are illuminating sections on the relation of the temple to the synagogue; the Jewish sects, including the Dead Sea Scrolls community; the significance of Easter and Pentecost; the meaning of the apostolic ministry, baptism and the Lord's Supper; the origin of the word "Nazarene"; the doctrine of the Virgin Birth; the development of the office of elder; the emergence of the office of bishop as the presiding officer of the council of elders; and the growth of creeds for the protection of truth against heresy.

The book is deeply rooted in Scripture, and is highly successful in weeding out nonessentials and getting to the bedrock of the factors which produced the church. Students of church history will rejoice in this illuminating presentation, and all who yearn for the greater unity of the church should study this book thoughtfully. — *Arthur W. Mielke, Park Central Presbyterian Church, Syracuse, N. Y.*

THE STRANGER OF GALILEE. *By R. E. O. White. Eerdmans. $3.50.*

THIS book may be summed up as follows: In the fullness of time God came to earth in the person of His Son to intervene in man's affairs, just as he comes today, inexplicably but surely, to man's bewilderment and for man's salvation.

The author, Reginald White, writes clearly, concisely, scripturally and with that insight that denotes the good minister of Jesus Christ.

He has used his consecrated imagination to make the days of our Lord shine in memory. He is essentially the prophetic preacher, pointing the relevance of the Gospel for our moral drifting and for our undisciplined

Pulpit Calendar

July 2 — Independence Sunday, 6th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 4 — Independence Day.
July 9 — 7th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 16 — 8th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 23 — 9th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 30 — 10th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 6 — The Transfiguration.
Aug. 13 — 12th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 20 — 13th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 27 — Festival of Christ the King.
Sept. 3 — Labor Sunday, 15th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 4 — Labor Day.
Sept. 10 — 16th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 17 — 17th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 24 — 18th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 24 – Oct. 1 — Christian Education Week.

ves and unruly passions. Like John, ke Jesus, he calls for repentance in day when too many followers of esus remember the triumphal days nd forget the Garden of Gethsemane nd the Hill of Calvary.

Beginning with the baptism by ohn, which signified total commitment to God's purpose for his life, the uthor takes the Master through his ublic ministry, in "all the old familar places" and tries to enlighten our earts by making the meaning clear n the various incidents, all of which elate to people, to human character, o men and women who had the good ortune to be near him. This, I take t, is the right way "to grow in grace nd favor" — to know Christ as a living Person, to feel his presence and o realize that he is able to do for is whatever, and more abundantly, he lid for his neighbors at Nazareth, his Twelve, and the hundreds of needy ones who thronged about him.

The reader may need help in temptation, healing for a wounded spirit, balm for a contrite heart, courage for a more forthright confession, wisdom for witness, compassion for others — well, this is a good book to reassure him on several of these counts. Do we want a short cut to heaven, simple ethics, an armchair religion? Then stay away from this *Stranger of Galilee* book! As the Twelve were "called to a great companionship" and learned of him the lessons of life, so this book will help us in the same way, to know him as the Great Physician, to listen to his conversation, to sense his nearness to God, and to be humbled by his sacrifice and to get a new grip on the Easter truth, and to realize again that "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." — *Herbert Beecher Hudnut, Woodward Avenue Presbyterian Church, Detroit, Mich.*

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES: SELECTED LETTERS. *Translated and with an Introduction by Elisabeth Stopp. Harper. $5.00.*

NO MORE winsome personality emerges from the great saints than Francis de Sales, known by most people through his *Introduction to the Devout Life* and his *Treatise on the Love of God.* His major writing, however, lay in his letters to those whom he counseled; 2100 of them fill 11 of the 26 volumes written by Francis. He wished to think of himself primarily as a "director of souls." These letters contain the advice given by him to his friends. In this present volume of 125 carefully selected letters from the greater collection, Elisabeth Stopp has given us a fresh and vital English translation. Here the reader feels the personal warmth, the realistic wisdom, the encouraging touch which Francis gave to so many. The interesting part of these letters seems to be that the reader can say, "Francis seems to be speaking to me today about my problems too!" A 26-page introduction penetrates carefully into the main events of Francis' life. While the letters contain a date and the addressee without topic notes, rather full index guides the reader to the themes discussed in the letters. Few Christian saints have written with more beauty and common sense than Francis de Sales, and these letters show why he was so widely sought for counsel by rich and poor, simple and brilliant, in the twenty years (1602-1622) he served as Bishop of Geneva. Christian preachers ought to be preaching more sermons about the saints, and here is a volume to be an incentive to a great biographical homily. — *Thomas S. Kepler, Graduate School of Theology, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio.*

PULPIT POST

(Continued from page 2)

interest in the forms and ceremonies of worship. And those same passages plainly indicate also God's high estimate of humility, sincerity and brotherly good will as the essential ingredients of true worship.

As we read this article, which has so many excellent insights, and recall the distinguished specialized career of the author, we find a question arising: "Have the liturgies of Bethel now bedazzled the once-clear vision of this erstwhile-Tekoan shepherd?"

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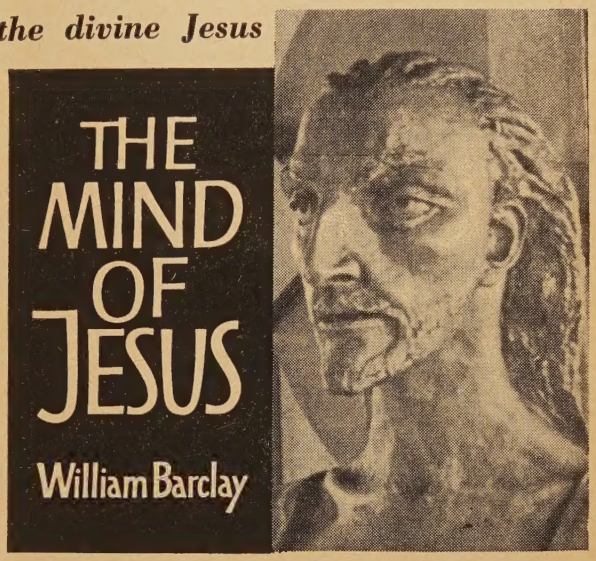

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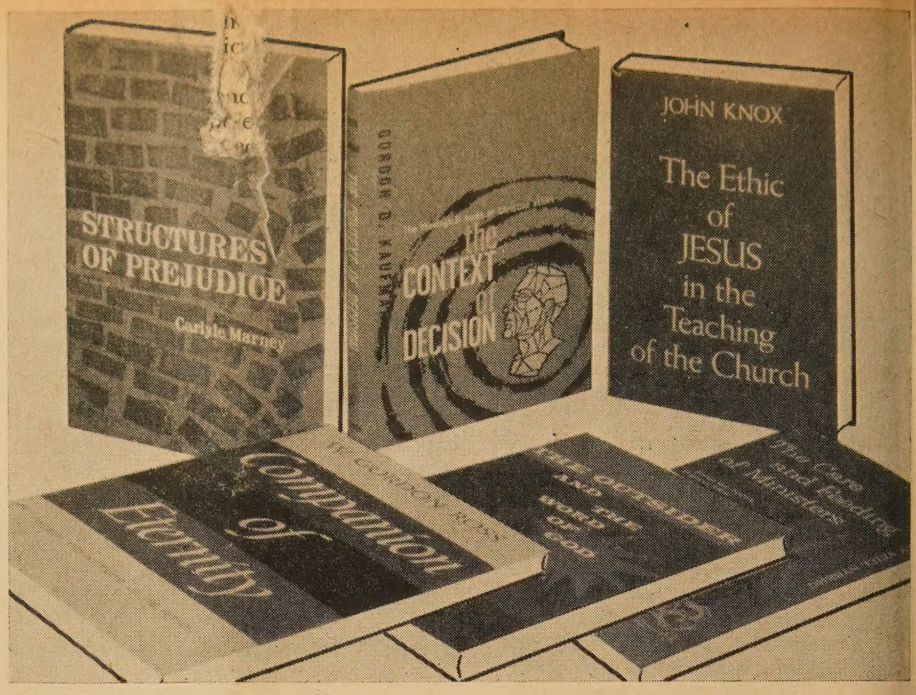

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